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STORICAL SAGA OF
DOUKHOBOR FAITH
1750–1990s

Toil and Peaceful Life

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BY SAM GEORGE STUPNIKOFF

COMMEMORATING
"THE BURNING OF ARMS" 1895
SASKATCHEWAN'S INDEPENDENTS 1902–1992

Dedication

To the memory of our parents
for their Christian ideal of
Universal Brotherhood while
living through these decades
of trial and triumph.

Cover Design by
Agatha Stupnikoff
Titled
TOIL AND PEACEFUL LIFE

Commemorating Doukhobor Heritage

HISTORICAL SAGA
OF THE
DOUKHOBOR FAITH 1750–1990s

DOUKHOBOR MOTTOS

Toil and Peaceful Life	The Welfare of all Nations is not worth the life of one child

The Doukhobor "BOOK OF LIFE" in the beginning was partly composed independently and partly formed out of the contents of the Bible. It consists of sacred hymns and psalms that were transmitted orally and lived in memory.

"RECORD IN YOUR HEART, PROCLAIM IN WORD"

Researched, Compiled and Published
by
Sam George Stupnikoff

Commemorating "THE BURNING OF ARMS" 1895

Saskatchewan's Independents 1902–1992

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HISTORICAL SAGA OF THE DOUKHOBOR FAITH
1750–1990s
TOIL AND PEACEFUL LIFE
by Sam G Stupnikoff Blaine Lake Saskatchewan

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Funding assistance for the promotion of my project is acknowledged, from the Saskatchewan History and Folklore Society, through Saskatchewan Lotteries.

The highlites of the condensed and comprehensive history of the Doukhobors are entirely my own selections. The information is factual to the best of my knowledge from oral interviews, recollections of the past, and to the accuracy of the sources identified herein.

Sam George Stupnikoff

Prelude

The Doukhobors emerged into history around the middle of the eighteenth century. Early in their philosophical development the Doukhobors began to recognize that it was wrong to use icons, ceremonies, religious symbols and embellishments of the Russian Orthodox Church. They sought religious freedom in the simple teachings of Jesus Christ, and began to worship God "in spirit and truth." They would sooner give up their personal possessions and suffer persecution than break the commandment, "Thou Shalt Not Kill."

In 1785, Archbishop Ambrosius of the Russian Orthodox Church, in an effort to identify a group of dissident Russian peasants as heretics, referred to them as "Doukoborsti." The term means "spirit wrestlers." The priest intended it as a derogatory label meaning that these people were struggling against the Holy Spirit.

The dissident Russian peasants adopted the name Doukhobors but gave it their own interpretation saying, "We are Spirit Wrestlers because we wrestle with and for the Spirit of God."

Doukhobor history is marked by efforts that brought their beliefs into practice in every-day life. Doukhoborism can more accurately be described as a way of life, rather than a religion.

Doukhobors aspiring to pacifism developed many unique cultural customs and traditions while living as a group for

several centuries. The most moral achievement by the Doukhobors was inspired by the high ideals of their spiritual leader, Peter Vasilievitch Verigin. They made a decisive stand against militarism and all forms of violence. On June 29, 1895, they piled and burnt all the arms and weapons they possessed—a symbolic act of total renunciation of taking life.

During this symbolic act, the Doukhobors encountered harsh oppression from the Czarist State and the Russian Orthodox Church authorities. They were beaten and tortured, and the freedom and privileges of their lifestyle no longer prevailed. The survivors were exiled and marched to northern Siberia and held in detention under extremely harsh conditions.

The harsh act of oppression against the Doukhobors by the Czarist State received world-wide attention from the people of Protestant faith with pacifistic ideals. Sufferings of such proportions attracted humanitarians such as Count Leo Tolstoy, a famed Russian novelist, as well as the Society of Friends ("Quakers") in England and America. Because of the earnest appeal by Tolstoy and the Society of Friends to the Czarist State for a reprieve for the Doukhobors, the same was granted by the Czar of Russia, Nicholas II. This reprieve permitted the Doukhobors to emigrate to a land where they could live within the concept of Doukhobor ideals of non-violence and pacifism, free of oppression.

The Doukhobors emigrated to the barren Western Canadian Territory in 1899 with a glowing tribute to their slogan of "Toil and Peaceful Life."

Burning of Arms
June 29, 1895

The burning of arms had taken place near several villages such as Spasowka and Slavyanka in the Kars region. However, the largest concentration for the burning of arms had taken place in the wet mountain region in the Republic of Georgia two miles from the village of Orlowka.

A huge pile of wood was made and on to it were laid all the arms and weapons that were in possession of the Doukhobors which was then sprayed with kerosene. A torch was set to the pile. The Doukhobors then assembled into a "V" formation around the burning pile and chanted psalms into the early dawn of June 29, 1895. The authorities of the Czar became aware of the burning, and the Cossacks came upon them two thousand strong. The Sergeant in command delivered the Governor's ultimatum to the elders. The Governor's ultimatum was that the Doukhobors appear before him in the village of Bogdanovka, some ten miles away. The elders replied, "We are praying. If the Governor wishes to speak to us, he may come to us, for he is alone and we are many." This enraged the Sergeant and he turned the Cossacks on them. The horsemen galloped upon them swinging their lead-tipped whips as the Doukhobors tightened their ranks. After three charges, the bruised and the bleeding were herded into marching formation. Chanting psalms, they were marched to the village of Bogdanovka where the Governor was waiting.

The enraged Governor was to command the Cossacks to open fire on the Doukhobors, but Count Korpinski intervened, halting the Cossacks of what seemed the certainty of extermination of the Doukhobors.

Severe persecutions followed this event, with the most severe being endured in the Penal Battalion when the Doukhobors surrendered their army documents and laid down their arms. They were flogged with thorny rods, with the thorns remaining in their flesh, and were thrown into cold dark cells. After several days, they were brought to the Chaplain who required them to adhere to the Orthodox Rites, which the Doukhobors had renounced, on the premise that no one or anything is Holy. The Doukhobors replied, "Holy is the Heavenly Father, Creator of All, and to Him we shall abide." Their position was unbearable. They were acting by their own conviction and on the advice of their Spiritual Leader, Peter Vasilievitch Verigin, who was in exile. Many perished in the persecution, but the majority was convinced and held out and were later exiled into Siberian Russia.

From that day, June 29, 1995, the Doukhobors portrayed their courage and determination to adhere to the Commandment "Thou Shalt Not Kill" by defying government authority to serve in the Militia and refusing to administer the Oath of Allegiance to the State. The Doukhobors said that their allegiance was to their Creator, the Heavenly Father, and to Him alone.

Facing Page: Burning of Arms, June 29th, 1985 - *from an oil painting by Agatha Stupnikoff. Artist's perception from oral research of the historic event, also recollections from those that survived persecution and oppression.*

From the Book of Life of Doukhobors

Translated Version 1978

This "Defence of a Christian" was composed by the Transcaucasian Doukhobors in 1894 when they refused to fulfill military duty and other government requirements.

Psalm 374

A Christian's Defence

"I am not going to give you my oath, nor am I going to serve you, because I am a Christian. I do not wish to kill my brethren nor force them to commit violence, according to the words of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ. I consider all people living on earth as children of one Father and therefore my brothers. Our Lord and God, Jesus Christ, forbids us to take an oath. Read the Gospel of Matthew, chapter twenty three. You will find there that the Lord forbids us to swear, and swearing is taking an oath. Even the law does not permit me to serve you, because as a Christian, I should not prepare myself willingly to slay my brothers. Read the Ten Commandments. It is written there: "though shalt not kill, nor steal, nor commit adultery." Our Lord Jesus Christ also gave us two commandments orally. The first commandment says: "Thou shalt love The Lord God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind -- this is the first and great commandment." The second one says: "Thou shalt love thy brother and neighbour as thyself." On these two commandments rests all the law of God."

The Doukhobors had chosen the date of June 29 1895 for the burning of the arms because it was a date commemorating the birth date of the Martyrs of early Christianity the Apostles St Peter and Paul and the birth date of their Spiritual Leader Peter V Verigin who was born on June 29 1859

On the date of June 29th a religious observance is held by the people of the Doukhobor Faith in each calendar year commemorating the historic event of the "Burning of Arms." It is known as St Peter's Day

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Facing Page *George (Greesha) Chernoff of Doukhobor Faith at the age of 86 standing beside the Cairn at the official unveiling ceremonies on June 14 1959. He was the last surviving forefather who endured the oppression and severe physical persecution by the Russian state-controlled Church and the Czarist Regime for their religious beliefs while observing the Commandment "Thou Shalt Not Kill." Deeply embedded lash scars along his back were evidence of the severe persecutions from which many had perished and those who survived preserved the spirit which guided them from tyranny to freedom in their exodus to the Canadian prairie region He passed away at the age of 92 years*

Standing on the left by the Cairn is Simeon Zbitnoff on the right is Jack Perehudoff pioneers of the immigration era Jack Perehudoff homesteaded River Lot 1 Twp 45 Rge 5 W 3rd Mer which was the site of the French fur trading post Fort La Montée built in 1797 Photo courtesy Saskatchewan Archives Board Saskatoon Star Phoenix Collection. S–SP–B 5103–13

Sleep on You Brave Faithful Eagles
(translated version)

This hymn was composed by the Doukhobors to commemorate those who did not survive the severe persecutions following the historic event the "Burning of Arms."

This hymn is occasionally sung at the conclusion of Sunday prayer services and on the religious day of observance on June 29th, commemorating St. Peter's Day.

Hymn

"Sleep on you brave faithful eagles
Sleep in the arms of the Lord
You have received from your master
Peace and the promised reward

Now on this hard earned pathway
Easy for us 'tis to tread
You paid the price they exacted
So we could journey ahead

Many and cruel were the tortures,
You took in Siberian plains
In Tundrian regions you suffered
Dreadful and sad were your days

Today as we think of your suffering
And of the hardships you passed
We pray to abide by your message
And join the great common task

Sleep on you brave faithful eagles,
Sleep in the arms of the Lord
We shall overcome all temptation
And follow Christ and His word."

Immigration

Prince Khilkov, who made the official link between Tolstoy and the Doukhobors, served as an officer with the regiment of Russian Guards. In 1877-78, he was stationed in an area near the Doukhobor villages. He was impressed by the Doukhobor way of life and was convinced by their arguments against the forms of Russian Orthodox religion.

His aristocratic existence was indiscreet by their teachings. He resigned from the army and settled to live amongst the Doukhobors. Khilkov, for his adversary action, was arrested and exiled to the Caucasus. Khilkov occasionally visited some four hundred Doukhobor families that lived in exile in the Caucasus. His presence in the Caucasus was deemed undesirable by the Russian authorities for his continued association with the Doukhobors.

Khilkov was permitted to leave Russia along with two exiled Doukhobor families, Ivan Evin and Peter Makhortov. The two families were representatives of the Caucasian Doukhobors in search of land for relocation and permanent settlement. England or America were the preference of the Doukhobors.

The attempt by the Doukhobors in 1897 to settle on the island of Cyprus, which was British territory, was a disappointment as the climate was extremely hot and the soil too sandy.

The party departed as dissidents. The Russian authorities warned them that they would not be permitted to return. They arrived in England on July 2, 1898, where Chertkov's Tolstoyan committee convinced them that Canada would be the most desirable place for the Doukhobors to settle.

Chertkov was a pacifist and an advocate of Leo Tolstoy. His appeal for amnesty for the Doukhobors from the Czar created annoyance. As an adversary of the Russian State, he was arrested; however, Chertkov's influence in the Court allowed him to leave the country in 1890. As an anti Czarist expatriate, Chertkov travelled to England where he set up a Tolstoyan colony at Purleigh, in Essex.

Arrangements for the Doukhobors' migration to Canada began in the third month of 1898. News was received in London, England, that the Doukhobors were granted permission to leave Russia.

The welcomed news resulted in great activity amongst the friends of the Doukhobors. The Society of Friends (Quakers) set up a special committee to work in cooperation with the Tolstoyan Committee in England to assist the Doukhobors in the selection of a suitable place for settlement. In correspondence with the Doukhobors, they favored Western Canada for settlement. The Canadian government was publicizing the uninhabited Western Frontier in Great Britain.

The Tolstoyans were aware of the favorable conditions the Old Colony Mennonites had obtained for settlement on the prairies. They had received their land in a large block, instead of quarter sections as compared to the individual settlers under the Dominion Lands Act. This enabled them to maintain their own form of communal organization and lifestyle by settling in villages instead of each being required to reside on his own homestead.

Tolstoy was a friend of James Mavor, a professor of political economy at the University of Toronto and an expert on the prairies and immigration.

In his letter of March 31, 1898, Tolstoy informed James Mavor that the Doukhobors were prepared to immigrate to Canada. Tolstoy stressed three points which the Doukhobors would expect assurance: No obligation to military service; no interference into the internal organization of the Sect; and block land grants where the Doukhobors could live communally, because they could not live on isolated farms. Tolstoy assured Mavor that the Doukhobors were excellent farmers and that the Doukhobors would send their children to school, provided that the children would not receive religious training at the schools.

Tolstoy's letter, and a letter from Chertkov's Tolstoyans, stimulated an existing interest on Mavor's part. Mavor suggested independently to the Minister of the Interior, Clifford Sifton, that the Doukhobors would fit admirably into his plans for accelerated settlement of the prairie regions. The experiment of settling the prairie regions with groups of people, including the Old Colony Mennonites in 1874, proved beneficial to the Canadian government, as individual settlers shunned the open prairies for reasons of survival.

An appeal was made to Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, by the Society of Friends to grant refuge for the Doukhobors in their new country where they could have their religious freedom and permanent settlement. Her Majesty responded to this appeal and granted refuge, permitting the Doukhobors to migrate to Canada with full religious privileges including exemption from military service.

With Tolstoy's letter and a letter from the Tolstoyan Committee in hand, Mavor intensified his negotiations with Sifton and the Minister for Immigration, William McReary, advising them specifically the expectations of the Doukhobors, namely, exemption from military service, assurance that they could hold their land in large blocks, and the form of education that would be provided to their children.

In response to Mavor's efforts the Ministers responded favorably, advising Mavor that the Canadian Government was anxious to populate the unopened regions of the North West and assuring Mavor that the Doukhobors would be permitted to settle in the unopened region The concessions enacted for the Old Colony Mennonites by the Canadian government in the late 1870s would be re-enacted for the Doukhobors as their expectations were broadly similar

Before Tolstoy and the Tolstoyans received replies to their letters from Mavor a Doukhobor delegation of Ivan Evin and Peter Makhortov their wives and children accompanied by Alymer Maude and Khilkov, sailed from Liverpool England to Canada on the *S S Vancouver* on September 1 1898. Alymer Maude who was a carpet merchant in Russia for many years and a friend and translator for Leo Tolstoy had returned to England in 1897 Maude was to act as the official representative of the Doukhobors The two families were to be examples of the well-behaved Doukhobors for the Canadians to observe

Upon arrival at the Quebec harbour on September 10, 1898, the delegation proceeded to Ottawa to meet with Sifton and Canadian authorities In their discussions, it was made quite clear that the Doukhobors would be required to conform with statistical provisions by registering marriages births etc As well they would be given the advantages of the Militia Act namely exemption from military service and the Hamlet Clause, permitting them to reside in villages

Ottawa Ontario
September 22, 1898

Mr Sifton to Professor Mavor

Dear Sir

I have your letter of the 26th Ultimo and I have read with interest what you say in regard to the Doukhobors I had a conference with Mr Maude on my way from Winnipeg and went into details with him to some extent I hope to be able to do something to assist in the removal of these people to the North West Territories where I am satisfied they would become useful citizens I have

to thank you for your kindness in forwarding information at your disposal, and beg to remain.

Yours faithfully

(Sgd) Clifford Sifton

While Maude continued negotiations in Ottawa, Khilkov and the Doukhobor delegation set out for the prairies in search of the best area for settlement. William McReary, Minister of Immigration in Winnipeg, provided them with information and arranged for guides. Unable to find a single block of suitable land large enough to settle as one colony, they accepted land in three blocks. Two of the blocks were in the Assiniboia Territory. The North Colony consisted of six townships, seventy miles north of Yorkton. The South Colony consisted of fifteen townships, thirty miles north of Yorkton. The third colony was in the Saskatchewan Territory near Prince Albert, consisting of twenty townships, and was known as the Prince Albert Doukhobor Reserve.

In the Prince Albert reserve, the even-numbered sections were to be homesteaded by Doukhobors, while the odd-numbered sections were to be selected by the railways.

The Doukhobors were willing to endure the hardships of a new beginning. The open and untamed Canadian prairies were the new horizons where the Doukhobors hoped to live within their beliefs, free of oppression.

PRIVY COUNCIL CANADA

(Extract from a Report of the Committee of the Honourable Privy Council, approved by His Excellency on December 6, 1898)

On a Report dated 30th November 1898, from the Minister of the Interior stating that arrangements have been completed with Mr. Alymer Maude, of London, England, the representative of the sect of Russians known as Doukhobors, who now inhabit the slopes of the Caucasus in Russia, for the immediate emigration to Canada of several thousands of these people. That from a despatch dated 27th May, 1898, addressed to the Foreign Office by Her Majesty's Consul at Batoum, it would appear that since their settlement in the region of the Caucasus, the Doukhobors have by their good behavior, diligence, sobriety and hard working qualities, brought nothing but prosperity to the barren localities in which they were originally settled, but as from religious doctrines they are averse to bearing arms, an exemption which the Russian Government has refused to countenance, they have been permitted by the latter to depart from Russia.

The Minister, under the circumstances, and considering that the Doukhobors would appear to be a most desirable class of settlers to locate upon the vacant Dominion Lands in Manitoba and the North West Territories, is of the opinion that it is expedient to give them the fullest assurances of absolute immunity from military service in the event of their settling in this country.

The Minister submits that subsection 3 of Section 21 of the Militia Act, Chapter 41 of the Revised Statutes of Canada, contains the following provision:

> "Every person bearing a certificate from the Society of Quakers, Mennonites or Tunkers, and every inhabitant of Canada of any religious denomination, otherwise subject to military duty, who, from the doctrines of his religion, is averse to bearing arms and refuses personal military service, shall be exempt from such service when balloted in time of peace or war upon such conditions and under such regulations as the Governor in Council, from time to time, prescribes."

The Minister recommends that under the power vested in Your Excellency in Council by the above provisions the Doukhobors settling permanently in Canada, be exempted unconditionally, from service in the Militia upon the production in each case of a certificate of membership from the proper authorities of their community.

The Committee submit the same for your Excellency's approval.

John J. Myers
Clerk of the Privy Council

(Signed)
The Honorable

The Minister of the Interior

The substantial accord that was reached with Canadian authorities was confirmed by the Deputy Minister of the Interior, James Smart, in a letter to Aylmer Maude. On October 5, 1898 Maude and Khilkov cabled Chertkov and the Tolstoyans in Purleigh that arrangements could begin for bringing the Doukhobors to Canada.

Tolstoy's son, Sergei, who was consulting with the Tolstoyan committee in England, immediately travelled to Batum, a port on the Black Sea, in the Republic of Georgia, to assist the British Consul in Batum in the transfer arrangements.

Two ocean freighters, the *Lake Huron* and her sister ship, the *Lake Superior*, were commissioned for the transfer of approximately 7,400 Doukhobors in four contingents to Canada.

The two ocean-going vessels were converted to accommodate the transfer with the help of a number of Doukhobor men who were experienced sailors. The first contingent was under the care of Sergei Tolstoy.

Funds for the transfer of Doukhobors were contributions from the Tolstoyans, Quakers, and from the scanty Doukhobor property. The largest amount was provided by Lev Tolstoy. He collected it mainly from wealthy Russians. His own contribution was derived from his latest novel "Resurrection," for which he gained world-wide attention and was awarded the world renowned Nobel Prize. Tolstoy was excommunicated from the Russian Orthodox Church for his philosophical convictions of pacifism and his association and support of the Doukhobors.

On December 21, 1898, the *Lake Huron* steamed out from the Port of Batum with the first party of 2,134 Doukhobors from the Wet Mountain Region of Georgia enroute to the Canadian port of Halifax. The *Lake Huron* sailed across the Black Sea, then entered and sailed across the Mediterranean Sea, which was deceptively smooth.

Life aboard ship was well organized. While the women washed clothes and prepared food, the men went about tasks apportioned to them. Since the ship was short-handed and in order to save expenses, some of the men who had formerly been sailors were assisting as a supplementary crew.

In the mid-Atlantic Ocean, the ship encountered a severe eight-day storm. Many of the Doukhobors were incapacitated by seasickness and were terrified by this strange new illness. Many feared they would never reach land. Ten from their party who hoped to find a new and happier life in Canada had been put to rest in the sea. The gale-force wind subsided three days before they reached land. The Doukhobor men cleaned down the ship with such zest that Canadian authorities remarked, they had never seen so well a kept ship come into the Halifax harbour.

In the afternoon of January 23, 1899, after a voyage of 33 days, the *Lake Huron* anchored at the port of Halifax. At that moment, the Doukhobors burst forth with hymns of praise and thanksgiving. It was an impressive sight. The men, clean and stalwart, were clad in sheep-skin coats and caps while the women wore skirts of bright red or blue, heavy black jackets and white head shawls. The men and women presented a picturesque appearance.

James Smart, the Deputy Minister of the Interior, reporters from the Maritime newspapers, Quakers from the United States, Khilkov and the two original Doukhobor delegates came on board to officially welcome the Doukhobors to their new homeland. This was the largest single group in the history of migration to Canada. They were impressed with their first view of these East European immigrants, the well behaved children and the well kept ship.

James Smart, after officially greeting the Doukhobors, wrote in his report, "I was greatly struck with their politeness and general good behavior, even with the children. I could not but feel that they were people who in this respect might set a good example to other residents of Canada."

From Halifax, the *Lake Huron* sailed on to St. John, where the onlookers cheered as the Doukhobors first stepped on Canadian soil. They fell on their knees with their brows to the soil. Their spokesman explained to the onlookers that he

and his brethren were bowing to the "Spirit of God" that brought them and made them welcome in their new homeland.

When the Doukhobors stepped on the land, the large crowd of curious onlookers cheered. The club women from Montreal welcomed them and presented the children with gifts of candy.

Five trains of colonist cars were waiting to carry the Doukhobors on their long journey to the prairies. The proprietors of the railway companies were eager to recruit the Doukhobors for settlement on the vacant prairies. In their negotiations with Maude, they agreed to transport the Doukhobors from their port of entry to the nearest point of their settlements at the cost of six dollars per head.

The first three contingents of Doukhobors, numbering approximately six thousand, were transported to the west. They were housed for several months in immigration halls located at Selkirk, Dauphin and Brandon, in Manitoba, as well as in Yorkton, in the Assiniboine Territory. Their final destination was the two reserved blocks of land in the Assiniboia Territory.

The latter of the two contingents were Doukhobors from the Yelizavetpol region. The last of the four contingents, numbering one thousand four hundred, were from the Kars region. They arrived in Canada on June 5, 1899. This contingent was transported to Winnipeg where they were housed in immigration halls. Their destination was three hundred miles west in the Saskatchewan Territory near Prince Albert, not far from the region of Louis Riel's Rebellion. While spending several months in immigration halls pending final arrangements for inhabiting their reserved land, the Doukhobor men acquired work when it was available to assist them financially in surviving the first harsh winter on the prairies.

The fourth group of approximately one thousand four hundred, after their stopover in Winnipeg, proceeded West by train to settle in the Prince Albert Reserve. They arrived

at the Duck Lake station in the month of November with their meager belongings they had brought from Russia. The group spent a long harsh Saskatchewan winter in makeshift homes and tents, with assistance from the Society of Friends "Quakers" in the United States. The Quakers sent vital supplies of food and clothing for their survival through the first winter on their new frontier.

Although 7,400 Doukhobors immigrated to Canada, approximately 12,000 Doukhobors chose to remain in Czarist Russia.

THE MONTREAL DAILY STAR—SATURDAY, JANUARY 21, 1899

ARRIVAL OF DOUKHOBORS

THE MEN AND WOMEN PRESENTED A PICTURESQUE APPEARANCE

On Friday last the steamer *Lake Huron* arrived at Halifax with the first installment of the Doukhobors, 2296 in number—1804 adults, 492 children—after a voyage of twenty-nine days from the south of Russia. The decks of the vessel presented a picturesque appearance. Men and women of all ages, the men garbed in sheepskin coats, fur leggings, top boots and fur caps, and the women dressed in red [illegible]like skirts, woollen comforters and sheepskin coats looked with curious eyes on the tug boat sent down to meet them.

The *Lake Huron* left Halifax about 8 o'clock Sunday for St. John, arriving on Monday afternoon at 4 o'clock. They brought with them about 250 tons of baggage. The ship docked at Sand Point, the wharves in the vicinity being alive with people anxious to get a look at the immigrants.

There were seven marriages and one birth on the voyage. The marriages were in the form customary with the Doukhobors, no ceremony being performed. The men selected the women of their choice and those chosen, being willing, that constituted the marriage ceremony. In this manner five couples were made happy early on the voyage of *Lake Huron*.

There were eleven sick people on the vessel who were in such a condition that the authorities did not feel like forwarding them, arrangements were made for their admission to the public hospital. The government will pay all expenses. One of the sick people, a woman, is suffering from peritonitis. A man is ill with pneumonia. The other ones are not serious. An interpreter has been left with them.

The scene in the C.P.R. warehouse Monday night and early yesterday morning where [illegible] will never be forgotten by those who saw them. In different parts of the warehouse might be seen what looked like a pile of sheep or goat skins, but underneath those skins were different families of Doukhobors who were having a sleep until such time as they would be called to embark on their train.

The arrangements for feeding the party from their departure here

until they arrive at their destination required considerable forethought and care. In each train were 100 pounds of cheese, 12 pounds of tea, 1 barrel of sugar, 50 bars of soap, 16 gallons of milk, 500 loaves of bread and 10 pounds of salt. At Ottawa three days provisions will be taken for the journey west. Each train is supplied with the following utensils: Two water casks, two half barrels, 14 dozen teaspoons, 5 dozen cups, 14 dozen plates, 5 mixing pans, two cheese knives, five coffee boilers, two tin pails, one box of matches, two sacks, two brooms, one table, one pound nails, a hatchet, sugar scoop, one bundle wrapping paper, four large blankets, and 25 yards towelling.

The first train carrying 41[illegible] people left Sand Point for Winnipeg at 8.25 Monday night. The second train, with 212 for Winnipeg and 296 for Yorkton, got away at 12.00 a.m. Tuesday morning. The third train had 125 for Winnipeg and 279 for Portage La Prairie, the fourth with 417 for Brandon and the fifth with 43[illegible] for Dauphin. Only the personal baggage was allowed on these trains, the heavy baggage being sent on a special train.

The C.P.R. officials here have been notified that the steamer *Lake Superior* which sailed eight days after the *Lake Huron*, has on board 1,990 souls.

reprinted from an original newspaper clipping
Public Archives, Canada.

DOUKHOBORS ARRIVAL

TOLSTOY'S PETS ARRIVE IN THE HALIFAX HARBOUR.

JANUARY 21ST, 1899

GREETED BY AMERICAN QUAKERS

Representatives of the Society of Friends Show Strong Emotions in Hailing the Exiles—Affecting Scenes.

HALIFAX, JAN. 20.— The steamer *Lake Huron*, with 2,300 Doukhobors from Batum on board is entering the harbour.

The arrival of the *Lake Huron* to-day at Halifax makes her voyage almost a month long from Batum, which port she left on December 22. After passing Quarantine here she will immediately be taken to St. John where six trains of ten cars each are waiting to convey the Doukhobors on a four day's trip over land.

Deputy Minister of the Interior Smart received word that the *Lake Superior*, which is bringing out the second lot of Doukhobors had on board 1,989 souls, but had not been reported from Gibraltar. She may however, passed about January 16. It is hardly possible that the *Lake Superior* may reach here only a few days behind the *Lake Huron*, and if she should, the landing of over 4,000 people in such a short time will not tax the energies of the department or the railways, for both are fully prepared.

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WITHIN THE VEIL

HALIFAX, JAN. 20. The steamer *Lake Huron* with 2,000 of the 5,000 Russian Quakers, known as the Doukhobors or "Tolstoy's Pets," who are immigrating to the Canadian North West, arrived at Quarantine this evening. The passengers will remain on board to-night. To-morrow they march ashore to the Lawlor's Island Quarantine station to undergo inspection. In the afternoon the steamer will re-embark her human freight and proceed to St. John, where they will land and take the railroad to their future home. There were ten deaths (infants) on the passage from Batum, Russia. There is one case of measles on board, isolated. Otherwise the ship's passengers have now been throughout remarkably free from contagion of every kind.

The Doukhobors were greeted by a party of their representatives in America, notably the Russian Prince Khilkoff, and Messrs. Elkington of Philadelphia and Gidley of Dartmouth, Mass.

Prince Khilkoff said the French government offered free transportation for the Doukhobors to settle in a French colony. The offer, however, was declined, as these people prefer to settle in Anglo-Saxon dominions, where they will not be subject to conscription.

When the ship came to anchorage in the spacious waters of Halifax harbour the Doukhobors gazed with interest on their surroundings. They were mainly undemonstrative and had a stolid appearance. They seemed comfortable and showed some pleasure at their safe arrival. They wore skin garments and caps. Mr. Elkington, of Philadelphia, and other Quakers, who received them, wore the broad brimmed hats peculiar to their sect. They wept with emotion as their boat approached the side of the big steamer, and they called to the people leaning over the rail, "Welcome Doukhobors!" At the head of the gangway the scene was affecting. The immigrants recognized Prince Khilkoff and crowded around him, all eager to hear him speak and to kiss him. A striking feature was the psalm chant in solemn service. The chanting began by the passengers themselves as the ship slowly came to anchor.

The singing was strong and remarkably pleasant. It was interrupted by the Prince's advent on board. They gave him a place in the services, which were conducted by Mr. Elkington, who with streaming eyes and face turned to the blue sky and with outstretched arms seemed deeply moved. This service consisted of prayer and supplication.

Everybody was uncovered, notwithstanding the chilly atmosphere. The singing of the hymn was then resumed. The burden of the chant as translated from the Russian by Prince Khilkoff was "God is with us, He has brought us through." Only a short stay on the deck of the steamer was permitted. Certain quarantine officials will remain on duty to-night. Very few Doukhobors speak English, and a large portion cannot read or write, owing to the lack of early advantages.

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reprinted from an original newspaper clipping
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Pioneer Settlement

As the snow melted on the prairies in the spring of the year 1900, through the yellow beaten grass the wild prairie crocus emerged. The Doukhobors began to move out of the immigration halls and temporary shelters to the open prairie frontier to land that was reserved for their habitation. They knew that it was necessary to get accustomed gradually to the living conditions in a new country and that the first years of pioneer life would challenge the muscle and mind of the new settlers. They experienced difficulty in communication, as Russian was the only language they spoke.

The Doukhobors established temporary encampments from which the settlers would spread out to their individual villages. The selection for the building of the village sites was made by the Doukhobors from various areas of the reserved land. The locations were near heavily wooded areas with an abundant supply of fresh water for the villagers.

The heavy timbers were to be cut and hewed for the building of village homes. Each village would consist of approximately fifteen homes, each house large enough to accommodate from four to six families. The population of each village was to be approximately 120 people.

The houses were build of hewn logs with sod-thatched roofs. The walls were smoothly plastered with a mixture of clay mud and dry prairie grass or straw. The structure of each dwelling

was one large room. In the centre of the floor was a large plain stove to supply the heat.

The beginning of toil and peaceful life for the new settlers free of oppression and government interference in their new land, began with a majority of young able-bodied men, trekking back to Winnipeg. They were employed in railway gangs during the summer months to earn the much needed income for the purchase of livestock and equipment. The remaining began the construction of village sites with the help of the elderly men, women and children.

Self-sufficiency helped the Doukhobors survive during the first years on their new frontier. Prairie sod was cultivated with hand-guided plows built by the villagers and drawn by oxen. Furniture was made out of hand-hewn wood. Utensils, such as spoons, were carved out of wood. The spinning of linen thread was woven on handmade looms and made into homespun cloth. Wool was spun for handknitted garments such as sweaters, stockings, mittens, gloves, etc. Grist mills for the grinding of grain into flour were built near several village sites.

The Doukhobors, being strictly vegetarians, relied on their gardening skills for the production of the necessary essentials of food for their livelihood. The Doukhobors made as much progress as could be expected by the time winter of 1900-1901 came upon them. A majority of villages were established and homes were built, some of the land was broken, and the crops they planted were harvested. This provided them with income

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Facing Page *Volunteer Doukhobor women pulling a hand guided plow of their own accord in the spring of 1900, breaking enough virgin sod for the planting of gardens. All able bodied men were occupied in the construction of village dwellings, while others trekked to Winnipeg to acquire work with the construction gangs on the railroad. This was the communitarian lifestyle of the Doukhobors.*

Action of this nature by Doukhobor women occurred only in one instance, in their new settlements on the Western prairies.

Photograph courtesy Saskatchewan Archives Board

from the harvested grain, together with the income that was earned from railway employment, to purchase a few livestock and a few more implements.

Petrovka was one of the first villages built in the Prince Albert Doukhobor Reserve, on the west bank of the North Saskatchewan River, being Section 30, Township 43, Range 6, West of the 3rd Meridian. (It is one of the focal points in the history of our province.)

The government of the North West Territories in 1901 established a ferry near the site of the Petrovka village to facilitate Doukhobor communities for access to markets in Rosthern some 30 miles away. It was first named the Doukhobor Ferry and later renamed to Petrofka, commemorating the village. With an increased volume of traffic, the Petrofka Ferry site was selected for the construction of a bridge to span the North Saskatchewan River in 1959, by the Department of Highways and Transportation. The "Petrofka Bridge" was officially opened to traffic on September 26, 1962, ending the era of the "Petrofka Ferry" crossing.

The village of Rosthern was located along the Qu'Appelle Long Lake Saskatchewan Railroad in the Rosthern Mennonite Reserve. The reserve contained 24 townships of land which the Old Colony Mennonites settled on in 1897. The Mennonite Reserve was bordered from the east bank of the North Saskatchewan River while the Prince Albert Doukhobor Reserve was bordered by the west bank of the North Saskatchewan River. These two groups, with broadly similar beliefs and lifestyles, maintained no association while living adjacently in the Milky Waters Region in the Republic of Georgia, and later on the Canadian prairies.

The Old Colony Mennonites, while living in the Republic of Georgia adjacent to the Doukhobor settlements, had

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Facing Page: *Petrofka Bridge, open to traffic September 26, 1962 a focal point in the history of the Province of Saskatchewan.*
Photo: Author

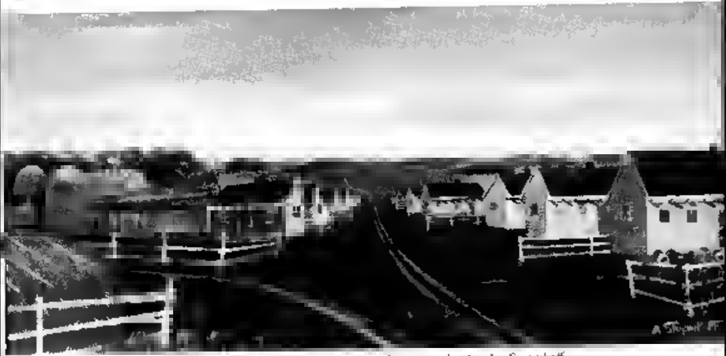
incurred in consequence the displeasure of the Russian Government and had been obliged by an official notification of the Governor of Tbilisi to confirm to the conscription law or to leave the country. The Mennonites chose to leave Russia and immigrated to Canada, establishing their communal settlements in two separate areas in the province of Manitoba in 1874. Being religious pacifists, the Canadian Government enacted special concessions for the Mennonites: the "Militia Act," being exemption from the militia, and the "Hamlet Clause," which was not a special concession to the Mennonites but accorded them with modifications of The Dominion Land Act before their immigration to Canada. In the late 1870's the act had been amended by the addition of the Hamlet Clause to facilitate the settlements of Mennonites.

The "Hamlet Clause" was re-interpreted for the Doukhobors prior to their emigration to Canada in 1899.

The clause read as follows:

> "If a number of homestead settlers, embracing at least twenty families with a view to greater convenience in the establishment of schools and churches, and to the obtainment of social advantages of like character, ask to be allowed to settle together in a hamlet or village, the Minister may, in his discretion, vary or dispense with the foregoing requirements as to residence, but not as to cultivation of each separate quarter-section entered as a homestead.

During the period of 1900-1901, some 66 villages were built by the Doukhobors. They were scattered broadly over their reserved land. Approximately 2 757 individual entries were made by the Doukhobors for homestead lands in accordance with the Hamlet Clause. The Hamlet Clause allowed them to reside in their villages while making entry on homestead lands within a radius of 11 miles surrounding the village site. Although each homestead entry was made individually, the land was farmed communally by the Doukhobors.



Doukhobor Village 1901 *From an oil painting by Agatha Stupnikoff*

Doukhobor Villages

South Colony
Assiniboia Territory
35 Villages

Kyrillovo
Old Gorilloe
New Gorilloe
Mosayovo
Novo Troitzkoe
Goushene
Matvayovo
Kalmakovo
Blagosklonne
Besednoe
Novoe
Blagovishennie
Kapustina
Najersda
Smyrennie
Parkoratonoe
Otradnoe
Savelnoe
Spaskoe
New Pakrofka
Riduonovo
Terpennie
Vernoe
Blagodarnie
Lubovnoe
Efremovo
Voskrisennie
Oobezhennie
Troodoloobevoe
Tomboscoe
Petrovo
Voznisennie
Prokoratonoe
Vaziennie
Slavnie

North Colony
Assiniboia Territory,
19 Villages

Troitzkoe
Oospennie
Archangelskoe
Perehodnoe
Pavlovo
Boghumdanoe
Gromovoe
Verra
Michaelovo
Vosnisennie
Hlebodarnoe
Pokrovskoe
Simeonovo
Osvoborsdennie
Lubomeernoe
Lebedevo
Teshomeernoe
New Kaminka
Kaminka

Prince Albert
Colony, Sask
Territory,
12 Villages

Karilowa
Bodanofka
Pakrofka
Petrovka
Oospennie
Slavyanka
Spasofka
Pasanofka
Large Horelofka
Small Horelofka
Troitzkaa
Terpennie

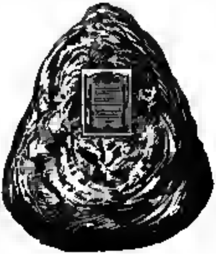
Doukhobor Village Names
were from their former
villages in Russia where
a certain group lived

AN
HISTORIC SITE

PETROFKA FERRY

Unveiling

SUNDAY JUNE 14, 1959
at 3:00 p.m., M.D.T.



TO COMMEMORATE MARKING THE SITE OF THE DOUKHOBOR FERRY ESTABLISHED IN 1901, AND LATER RE-NAMED THE PETROFKA FERRY

PETROFKA FERRY

This site was chosen not on the basis of the natural beauty of its location on the west bank of the North Saskatchewan river but because it was one of the local points in the history of this Province. The rivers which had been the watering places for millions of buffalo and the highways for the Indians and fur-traders, finally became barriers to the carts and wagons of the agricultural settlers, and to the railroads, which began to advance across the prairies in the late nineteenth century. A railroad from Regina to Prince Albert, completed in 1890 brought settlers of mixed origin into the Rosthern area just east of this site.

In 1899 a group of settlers arrived from Russia whose story is unique even in the history of the colorful settlement of Saskatchewan. These were religious refugees, known as Doukhobors, a pietistic, pacifist sect, who had maintained themselves in Russia for three hundred years against the powerful pressure of a state church and an absolute Czarist regime. When the pressure was increased in the late nineteenth century they were assisted to emigrate with the material help of the eminent Russian novelist, Count Leo Tolstoy, the active assistance of the Quaker Society of Great Britain and the United States, and the co-operation of the Canadian Government. Among the seventy-five hundred who came to Canada some fifteen hundred were brought to this area and settled in the villages north and west of this site. This settlement was begun in August, 1899.

The Doukhobors suffered the hardships and difficulties common to all our pioneers. Their rugged beginnings were lightened by three factors, an outstanding capacity for hard work and shrewd planning, forms of mutual aid and co-operative arrangements, and the sympathetic help of outside friends. Among the friends were the Quakers already mentioned. This Society built a school house and supported its first teachers, among whom was a very remarkable woman, Miss Ella Martin from Hamilton, Ontario, and Herman I. Fast. The latter taught Russian. The remains of the stone foundations of the school house can still be seen on top of the hill west of the site.

In 1901 the government of the North West Territories established a ferry to facilitate east-west communications. It was early known as the Doukhobor Ferry but later was called Petrofka after the former village in the immediate vicinity. The name means Peter's and was a common Russian designation in honour of the saint.

The Ferry proved a great convenience not only to the Doukhobors, but also to other settlers who began pouring into this area after the turn of the century. Many of the pioneer memories of all the people of this region are connected with this important river crossing. Petrofka Ferry is therefore one of the many focal points throughout our vast Province which is of special historical interest and significance.

Dr G. W. Simpson.

PROGRAMME

Chairman T L. Hill, *Deputy Minister,*
Dept. Travel and Information.

Opening Prayer (Our Father . . .)

Introductions

Doukhobor Song

Address by Hon R A Walker Q C,
Attorney General

Doukhobor Children's Choir

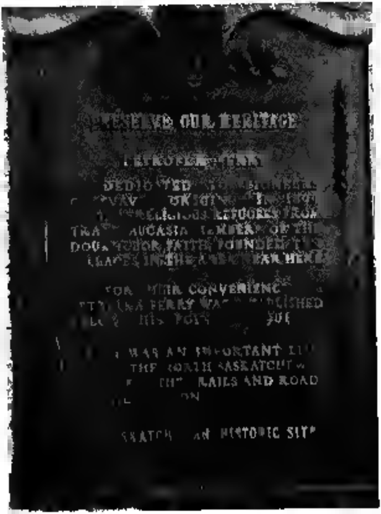
Address and Unveiling by
P G. Makaroff Q C

Acceptance and Thanks by
John Androsoff *President,*
Blaine Lake Doukhobor Society

Doukhobor Students' Choir

Greetings from Canadian Association
of Slavists by Dr. J B Rudnyckyj,
President

Traditional Community Song
("We have concluded our Meeting")


PRESERVE OUR HERITAGE
PETROFKA FERRY
FOR THEIR CONVENIENCE
FERRY WAS ESTABLISHED
WAS AN IMPORTANT LI
THE NORTH SASKATCHEWAN
RAILS AND ROAD
SASKATCHEWAN HISTORIC SITE

Above *Bronze plaque mounted on the cairn near the site of the first Doukhobor Village and the Petrofka Bridge* Photo Author

Facing Page *Cairn overlooking the North Saskatchewan River west bank near the site of the first Doukhobor Village and the Petrofka Ferry Cairn dedicated by the province of Saskatchewan.*
Photo Author

Land Crisis

On the prairies were the new horizons where the Doukhobors had hoped to live a lifestyle within their beliefs Their arrival was at a crucial time in the history of the Canadian prairies The Canadian government was in the process of solidification Untamed prairie wilderness where every community was law within itself had died with Louis Riel and the fallen Metis in the rebellion of 1885 "Battle of Batoche."

The Doukhobors played a considerable part in opening the west not only by breaking and cultivating large areas of land but also by building many miles of vital railway links often under conditions that other workers were unwilling to accept Though many Canadians were hostile from the beginning those who actually visited the Community were more inclined to be impressed than otherwise because of the ability of the Doukhobors to achieve so much in so little time and particularly from the use of modern machinery and the accumulation of livestock to enhance their agricultural operation With Verigin's intellectual business approach and his powers of inspiring his followers he drew many admirers wherever he appeared

The year 1902 marked the turn of events in the Doukhobor communities with the government clearly wishing to break up the village pattern As the first approach the government specified that if any man who lives in a village and cultivates his land more than three miles from the village to which he

lives, his homestead entry will be protected for six months to enable him to build and live on the land. If he does not build and live on the land within that time, his entry will be cancelled. This was the beginning of erosion of Verigin's vision of a communitarian enterprise on the prairies when a number of Doukhobor families preferring economic independency to the communitarian lifestyle left the villages and made entry on homestead lands. Conforming to The Homestead Act, they commenced living independently. They were therefore called the "Independent Doukhobors."

The Doukhobor homestead crisis between the government and the Doukhobors began in 1904. The Community Doukhobors ignored government authorities by failing to supply vital statistics, failing to conform with the Homestead Act, and also refusing to sign the Oath of Allegiance. They felt that the Oath of Allegiance would lead to conscription. The administering of oath was contrary to their beliefs. The demands of the Canadian government were not clearly understood by the majority of Doukhobors. The extent of limitations of conditions under which they came to Canada and their suspicions of government's action of law enforcement were a reminder of the oppression and persecution of the past.

The lack of detailed written agreements between the principal parties involved in the arrangement was eventually the product of great misunderstanding, since it enabled the Doukhobors to claim rights they did not legally possess, and Sifton's successor, the newly appointed Minister of the Interior, John Oliver, to act in ways not in the spirit of understanding reached in 1898.

The two territories of Assiniboia and Saskatchewan were absorbed into a new province in 1905 which became the province of Saskatchewan.

The influx of people of various origins into the prairie region began the settlement of the vacant lands surrounding the Doukhobor reserves. Land-hungry men from eastern Canada

Manitoba and some from the United States, began to squat on unoccupied Doukhobor lands in expectation that they would soon be open to the public.

Resentment and prejudice towards the community lifestyle of the Doukhobors became evident by individual settlers outside the Doukhobor reserve boundaries. Their grievance attracted the attention of the new Minister of the Interior, Oliver, who replaced Sifton in 1906. The Conservative opposition to the Liberal government of Sir Wilfred Laurier at the time was highly critical of the concessions enacted for the Mennonites and the Doukhobors in respect to the addition of the Hamlet Clause to the Dominion Land Act regulations. The newly appointed Minister re-interpreted the Hamlet Clause and appointed a special commission headed by Reverend John McDougal, a Methodist minister. He was to enforce the homestead land regulations, and to investigate all land claims with full power to cancel entries at his discretion of those who did not conform.

Reverend McDougal, the Christian minister, upon visiting the Doukhobor villages went about his task of informing the Doukhobors. His presence was to enforce the homestead land regulations as re-interpreted by Sifton's successor, Oliver, relating to the Hamlet Clause. Thus all entries on homestead land in excess of a three-mile radius from the villages must be occupied by those families who made entry on the said land. They must conform to the Homestead Act by signing the Oath of Allegiance and failure to do so would result in the disposition of their lands.

The remaining land within a three-mile radius would remain for the Community Doukhobors and an allocation of 15 acres per family would be granted, however, this land would be held by the government for the protection of the Community Doukhobors only during the pleasure of the government.

The Doukhobors submitted petitions against the government's actions to the Prime Minister and the Minister

of the Interior. Professor James Mavor came to their defense with knowledge of conditions under which the Doukhobors were brought to Canada, that this action was a breach of faith. Negotiations between Reverend McDougal and Peter V. Verigin resulted in failure, with the Doukhobors refusing to accept McDougal's interpretation. Because of their religious faith as pacifists, they offered no further resistance. This began the dissolution of the Doukhobor reserves.

By the year 1907, all entries made on land by Community Doukhobors were cancelled by the government for failure to comply with the homestead land regulations. The cultivation and improvements on all cancelled Doukhobor homestead lands were disregarded and no compensation was awarded to the Doukhobors by the government as a result of the cancellation.

On June 1, 1907, some 258,880 acres were made available for entry to the general public at the Yorkton and Prince Albert Land Branch Offices. This resulted in a land rush such as had never before been seen on the Canadian prairies. The magnitude of the crowds of applicants for lands thrown open were approximately 236 homesteads at Prince Albert and 1364 at Yorkton. Consequently the duties of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police included responsibility for the handling of the crowds and maintaining order. Their duties as prescribed were very trying.

In the years 1908 to 1910, some 3 000 Doukhobors adhered to the independence of individual farming by making

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Facing Page *Land rush at the Prince Albert land branch office for the improved abandoned Doukhobor lands in the Prince Albert Doukhobor Reserve abandoned by the community Doukhobors due to re-interpretation of the Dominion Land Branch Act in 1907 with the cancellation of the Hamlet Clause.*

This began the dissolution of the Doukhobor villages and the reserve boundaries were open for homesteading to settlers of various origin. The community Doukhobors received no compensation for the homestead lands they improved.

Photo Courtesy Saskatchewan Archives Board

application for homestead lands that were a part of their community prior to the dissolution of the reserves. Conforming with Dominion Land regulations, they remained to farm as Independent Doukhobors of Saskatchewan.

The majority of Doukhobors who desired to continue a communal way of life left the province and moved to the Kootenay Valley in British Columbia, with their spiritual leader Peter V. Verigin, where they acquired land for a new beginning. The stress of this transitionary period had resulted in a variety of changes. In the case of a small number of people known as "Sons of Freedom," their bizarre and tragic behaviour in protest to government law enforcement was completely incompatible with Doukhobor ideals of non violence and pacifism. Their unethical behaviour received no recognition or support from the Independent or the Orthodox Doukhobors; their existence eventually diminished over the years.

Statement re Doukhobor Homesteads

Ottawa, August 1 1907

The Doukhobor Commission dealt with a total of 2,757 Doukhobor homesteads in Yorkton, Prince Albert and Regina agencies.

There were cancelled on the recommendation of the Doukhobor Commissioner Doukhobor entries totalling	2 503
There were standing vacant Doukhobor homesteads which had previously been cancelled to the number of	79
There were standing reserved as village sites	39
There were entries standing of independent Doukhobors numbering	136
Total in three districts	2 757

Statement re Disposition of Doukhobor Homesteads

Ottawa, August 1 1907

Following is a memorandum showing how the 2 757 Doukhobor homesteads dealt with by the Doukhobor Commission have been disposed of:

Set apart as reserves for Doukhobor communities		768
Under entry to independent Doukhobors		384
Thrown open to the general public		
Taken to date	1,211	
Still untaken	394	1 605
		2 757

Spiritual Leaders

A group of Russian peasants, titled as "Icon Wrestlers," first emerged in Southern Russia in the early part of the 18th century. Their radical rejection of churches and priesthood said "it was wrong to worship icons, embellishments and religious sacraments." Their neglect of the Bible in favour of their own orally transmitted doctrines meant that no one is born to, or vested with, powers for the absolution of sin. The indwelling of the Spirit of God is in every man. They did not accept the sacrament of baptism, a general popular Christian one. A baptism with water is not beneficial to our soul; for our soul baptism means that one accepts God's word; we are baptized by Christ in the name of the Holy Spirit. A baptism with water cleanses the body only, and not the soul. This completely divorced them from the Russian Orthodoxy. They developed unique cultural customs, traditions and lifestyles that spread throughout Southern Russian.

The first of their profound leaders was Silvan Kalesnikov in 1750. After his passing in 1775, the Icon Wrestlers acknowledged Llarion Pobirokin as their leader. After Pobirokin's death in 1792, he was succeeded by Savelii Kapustin.

During Kapustin's leadership occurred the first major investigation of the Doukhobors by Russian authorities. While living in communes, they did not merely cling obstinately to their faith, but they attracted other Russian peasants and people of other origins, such as Finns, Swedes, Ukrainians, as well

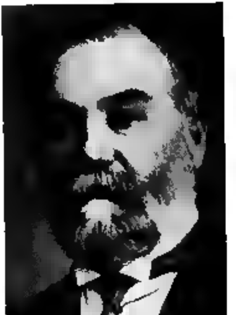
as the Russian Cossacks and military personnel, who abandoned the militia to live amongst the Doukhobors.

The decision of the authorities was to banish these sectarians to prevent any further influence of other people. They were dispersed to various regions of the empire. The area chosen was in the province of Taurida, an open frontier along the Milky Waters, where Tartars occasionally roamed. Their only neighbors were the Mennonites who preceded them.

With the death of Kapustin in 1817, the Kalmykov ruling dynasty began, with Vasilii Kalmykov succeeding Kapustin as leader. Kalmykov's leadership ended in 1832, and he was succeeded by his brother, Ilarion Kalmykov. Under their leadership, much of the fertile soil was broken and the Doukhobor communes thrived because of their experience as farmers.

Peter Kalmykov, the last of the Kalmykov brothers, was named leader of the Doukhobors in 1845. He grew up to be a more dynamic personality than any of his predecessors who bore his family name. Peter Kalmykov's contribution to Doukhobor history was his marriage in 1856 to Luker'ia Gubanova. Luker'ia, with strength and will equal to that of her husband, had an intellectual character far surpassing his. Under Peter Kalmykov's leadership, the Doukhobors were permitted to leave the province of Taurida and return to the uplands of Caucasus. Many chose the wet mountain region while others settled in the provinces of Yelezavitpol and Tiflis. Peter Kalmykov with failing health and before his death in 1864 named his wife, Luker'ia, as his successor to assume the role of leadership.

Luker'ia Kalmykova was the first and only woman leader amongst the Doukhobors in all their history. Her accession was unopposed. Her doctrine of spiritual leadership, kindness and wisdom gained her respect from all who knew her. Luker'ia created unity amongst the Doukhobor villages and gained respect from government authorities for her attentive



Peter Vasilievitch Verigin, first leader of the Doukhobors in Canada.

approach to vital matters of relations with the non Doukhobor people.

Peter Verigin, who was born on June 29, 1859, was the sixth son of Vasilii Verigin. His mother, Anastasia Verigin, was the granddaughter of Savelii Kapustin.

Peter Verigin, being the great-grandson of Savelii Kapustin an intelligent, educated and knowledgable of spiritual understanding of Doukhobor traditions, attracted the attention of Luker'ia Kalmykova. With failing health and impressed with Peter Verigin's dedication to Christian life and Doukhoborism, Luker'ia Kalmykova, expressed her wishes to village Elders that Peter Verigin inherit the leadership of the Doukhobors after her death. In January 1887 Doukhobors gathered in thousands by the grave of Luker'ia for a memorial service ending with six weeks of mourning. They sang psalms to commemorate their departed leader. When the service ended, Ivan Makhortov stepped forward and bowed before Verigin and called on the Doukhobors to acknowledge Peter Verigin as their leader in the spirit of Christ. Standing in a ceremonial "V," the Doukhobors bowed before Verigin, indicating their acceptance of Verigin as their Spiritual Leader.

Verigin's reforms in the Doukhobor pattern of living were to abstain from drinking alcohol, smoking, consuming meat, and thereby becoming vegetarians. Verigin renounced the Russian conscription law of the 1880's which was imposed on the Doukhobors, and instructed his followers to refuse military service. Verigin refused to take an oath of allegiance to the Czar, saying his allegiance was to God alone and "to Him I shall abide." Verigin's attitude created a displeasure for the Russian Authorities. He was arrested and sentenced to five years in exile in Shenkursk in the far northern province of Archangel. While in exile, Verigin's followers from the Caucasus found their way by evading police and travelling under false passports to meet secretly with Verigin. Verigin's inspirational messages were in oral form in which he would speculate on the true Christian way of life and a religious form of communal living. With increasing pressures for Doukhobors to conform to the laws of the Russian empire, Doukhobors were willing to suffer oppression and persecution rather than yield to their demands.

A small party of Doukhobors who were not Verigin's followers often cooperated with the authorities and acted as informers. The Czarist officials hoped that by separating Verigin from his followers it would deprive them of any further inspiration to continue their resistance and gradually fall under the influence of the party that cooperated.

The decision of the authorities was to extend the exile sentence of Verigin and to further the distance between him and his followers. On November 4, 1894, Verigin was exiled to Northern Siberia. The final destination was a small village of Obdorsk at the mouth of the river Orb, on the Arctic Sea, approximately 3,000 miles from the Doukhobor settlement. As a political exile

he was permitted to live in a small house on the edge of the settlement. This great distance did not discourage Verigin's followers as they still continued their secret missions to meet with him, as they did in the past.

When the Doukhobors began their immigration to Canada, Verigin was not permitted to join his followers and was detained in his Siberian exile. Verigin was released in the autumn of 1902, after 15 years in exile, and was told by the Russian authorities that he must immediately leave for Canada. His request was denied to see his wife and his son, Peter, who lived in the Caucasus. The British mission in St. Petersburg made arrangements for Verigin's entry into Canada. In Moscow, Verigin was welcomed by Tolstoy. This was Verigin's first meeting with a man from whom he learnt so much, by reading his writings. Tolstoy admired Verigin for his powerful personality, with a mind that was quick, capable and profound. Tempered by his exiled life, he was widely read and was confident in the role as leader for which he was trained, in his younger years, by his predecessor, Lukeria Kalmykova.

Verigin was well prepared for the task that awaited him in Canada. After meeting with Aylmer Maude in Essex, England, Maude enlightened him on the situation he would be confronted with in Canada.

Verigin set sail and landed in St. John, where he was met by a Doukhobor delegation. On December 22, he reached Winnipeg where he met Acting Commissioners, Moffat and Crerar, the Yorkton immigration agents.

It was evident to the Canadians that Verigin was a very different kind of man than his followers. His whole expression was that of a man who suffered much and had triumphed over everything through his courage and constancy.

Verigin's attempt to put into practice his vision of an autonomous communitarian society on the prairies came in conflict with Canadian authorities, relating to the Dominion Land Act regulations.

Peter P (Chistiakov) Verigin second leader of the Doukhobors in Canada

Verigin and a great majority of his followers in 1908 left the prairies and purchased land in the Kootenay Valley of British Columbia where their community was incorporated as the Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood This permitted Verigin and some 5,000 of his followers to continue their communitarian life On October 29 1924 Peter V Verigin's reign over the Doukhobors of approximately 24 years ended when a railway coach in which he was traveling with eight other people through the mountains between Brilliant and Grand Forks mysteriously exploded The story of this tragedy, as told in detail by Canadian journalists led to no solution to the mystery

The Orthodox Doukhobors of British Columbia chose their new leader at the six week graveside memorial service of the late Peter V Verigin He was Peter P (Chistiakov) Verigin the son of their former leader Peter Chistiakov inherited his father's

intelligence and completed his education at an institute in Tbilisi. He was accustomed to Doukhobor traditions while living with his wife, one daughter and one son, Peter, in the Doukhobor settlements of the Soviet Union. Verigin left his family to live with the Doukhobors when he departed for Canada. (Verigin's wife Anastasia passed away soon after Verigin settled in Canada.)

Verigin sailed to Canada and landed in New York on September 16, 1927, where he was met by the acting chairman of the Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood. They travelled to the South Colony of the Independent Doukhobors in Saskatchewan where he was welcomed in Doukhobor tradition by an overwhelming crowd as he stood on the balcony of his father's house, in the village of Verigin.

Verigin then visited other Doukhobor settlements on the prairies, including the stronghold of the Independent Doukhobors in Blaine Lake, Saskatchewan.

When Verigin arrived at his final destination in the Kootenay Valley of British Columbia, he was welcomed by thousands of his followers at a graveside service for his late father at Brilliant, B.C. Verigin then established his permanent home in his father's house in Grand Forks and inherited the large religious co-operative established by his father in 1908. It consisted of a timber operation, growing orchards of fruit, vegetables, constructing and operating a jam factory. The co-operative was facing problems internally and financially. Families began to leave the co-operative, establishing themselves in an individual lifestyle.

The downfall of the co-operative began in 1937 when two major creditors proceeded with foreclosure and issued eviction notices early in 1939. The creditors then sold the land to individual members of the Doukhobor community on agreement of sale.

Verigin's philosophy of Donkhobors living in the midst of Canadian society was not in the vision of his father. Verigin

favoured individual ownership as compared to community oriented life. Peter P. Verigin's initiative brought most of his former community members together in a new organization, being the "Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ," also known as the Orthodox Doukhobors.

Verigin frequently visited communities of the Independents in Saskatchewan, and admired them for their positive initiative of transition by adapting to the Canadian lifestyle, while at the same time retaining their valuable heritage.

Verigin was well aware that the Independents were not subjected to his leadership. Verigin counselled young people of Canadian origin and followers of the Doukhobor faith to acquire all the positive, constructive aspects of knowledge and skills that were offered through formal education. He emphasized that education was the key to progress.

Peter P. Chistiakov Verigin, after his arrival in Canada, made arrangements for his 18 year-old grandson, John Voykin, to immigrate to Canada. John was born in the west mountain region in the village of Orlowka and arrived in Canada in 1928. John received his education in the province of British Columbia and assumed the name John J. Verigin.

Peter P. Verigin, with failing health, was admitted into a Saskatoon hospital on January 1, 1939. After a short illness, he passed away on the 11th day of February. He was buried in Brilliant in the same tomb beside his father.

The attempt by the Orthodox Doukhobors to locate the son of Peter P. Chistiakov Verigin in the Soviet Union, was to assume the role of leadership and enhance the continuity of the Verigin dynasty in Canada. On November 14, 1957, the Orthodox Doukhobors received official confirmation of the death of the son of Peter P. Chistiakov Verigin, in the Soviet Union, from the Soviet State authorities through the International Red Cross.

On August 16, 1960, at an official religious ceremony at the Verigin tomb by the Orthodox Doukhobors John J. Verigin the grandson, was acclaimed Honorary Chairman of the "Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ."

John J. Verigin was awarded the "Order of Canada" in 1976 for his work for peace and mutual understanding between people of various ethnic backgrounds in Canada.

John J. Verigin with his wife and a family of three children live in the interior of British Columbia in the settlement where the former Verigins first lived.

Religion and Religious Observances

Independent Doukhobors do not submit to the hereditary leadership vested in the Verigin family which is accepted unquestionably by the majority of the Orthodox Doukhobors members of the "Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ," who live in the interior of British Columbia.

The Independents have maintained a friendly relationship with their counterparts, the Orthodox Doukhobors in British Columbia. The ideology and basic principals of their faith have not been altered and are maintained as that of their forbears.

Doukhobor Prayer Services are held in what is known as the Doukhobor Prayer Home. The prayer home is of plain design and architecture with no religious sacraments. As one enters the Prayer Home, there are two Doukhobor mottos hung on the front wall, the motto to the left of the wall reads "Toil and Peaceful Life," and the motto to the right on the wall reads "The Welfare of All Nations is not worth the Life of One Child."

For Sunday Prayer Services and religious observances, a small ceremonial table is placed covered with a white tablecloth. On it are placed a loaf of bread, water and salt signifying, bread and water, "The Staff of Life"; the salt – "Salt of the Earth." The men assemble on one side of the table and the ladies on the opposite side, facing each other in a "V" formation. Services commence with the reciting of religious prayers by volunteers of the congregation, followed by the singing of psalms and religious hymns. The Lord's Prayer is then recited by a volunteered individual from the congregation and followed by the singing of the Lord's Prayer by the congregation. Prayer services are approximately three-quarters of an hour. The religious psalms and hymns are sung without musical accompaniment. A designated Elder conducts the prayer services. Doukhobor choirs contribute to religious gatherings and also to cultural life as well.

PSALM 73

What Was the Purpose of Christ's Coming to Earth?

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty Creator who created us heaven and earth![174] who created us and gave us light. We confess to the heavenly God, because He is good, because His mercy is eternal, because He forgives us all our transgressions. We also worship the Father and the True Holy Spirit, because our Father seeks such worshippers. We worship our Father with our true spirit, because God is a Spirit![177] God is word, God is man![178] therefore are we worthy to worship Him. We are also the participants of His life-giving, strange and immortal sacraments of Christ for the salvation of our sins.

We are baptized with the word of God, in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen. The paradise of the Holy Spirit is today upon us. Let us take His cross and say: save, Oh Lord, your people and bless us. Lord, and reward us![179] We desire to establish ourselves firmly as sons of the Church of God. For the Lord says this: "You are a temple of the living God. I shall enter you and dwell in you. I shall be your God, and you my people[180]

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174 Comp. "Epistle to the Hebrews," ch. 11, v. 1. Comp. with question and answer 7 of Psalm 5. (See p. 36 in the "Book of Life")
F. a. V. B. B.

175 The Doukhobors call this Psalm "The Key of the Faith."
F. a. V. B. B.

176 In the "Gospel" of John, ch. 4, v. 23 and 24, it is said:
"23. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him."
"24. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."
F. a. V. B. B.

The prayer home has banquet facilities in the lower level of the building where occasionally potluck dinners are held, and visitor entertainment, bazaars and afternoon teas, enhance cultural activity

Religious observances are: Christmas, Easter, and there is also a significant religious day of observance in the Doukhobor faith, a day known as "St. Peter's Day." On June 29th of each calendar year, commemorating the event, special prayer services are held followed by an outdoor picnic lunch. Following the religious service, an afternoon program is held of choir singing by various age groups, and also visiting choirs from various areas of Saskatchewan, and on occasions from Alberta and British Columbia. Guest speakers are invited from various levels of government, such as civic, provincial and federal. Invitations are also extended to people of various origin and faith to share in the commemorative event which is alternated annually between Blaine Lake and Saskatoon.

On October 19, 1987, the Saskatchewan Doukhobors were privileged by the visit of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth and His Royal Highness to the National Doukhobor Heritage Village at Verigin, Saskatchewan. The former home of Peter Vasilievich Verigin is a part of the Heritage Village and now designated a "National Doukhobor Museum."

When the Royal Cavalcade with Her Majesty arrived at the National Doukhobor Heritage Village, there was no traditional "Royal" gun salute as Her Majesty and His Royal Highness stepped from their limousine. The Doukhobors, being "conscientious objectors," welcomed the Royal Couple by singing the hymn "Precious Moments To Us God Has Gifted" by the local choir from the Verigin area

After a brief visit to the museum and chatting with numerous individuals from the large crowd in attendance, the Royal

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Facing Page *Prayer Home of the Independent Doukhobors located in the town of Blaine Lake, Saskatchewan.* Photo Author

Cavalcade departed while the choir sang the traditional hymn, "God Be With You Till We Meet Again."

A religious observance was held on the grounds of the National Doukhobor Heritage Village site on July 9, 1989, by the Doukhobors commemorating their ninety years in the province of Saskatchewan and Canada.

In attendance were the Lieutenant Governor for the province of Saskatchewan, the Honourable Sylvia Fedoruk, representatives from both Federal and Provincial governments, commemorating the historic event.

The occasion hosted descendants of Doukhobor faith and people from other ethnic origin from across the vast Canadian Nation

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Facing Page Verigin Museum and Tolstoy Statue, *from an oil painting by Agatha Stupnikoff*

The Verigin Museum is the former home of Peter Vasilievitch Verigin. The museum portrays the finest example of Doukhobor architecture built in 1917, located on the grounds of the National Doukhobor Heritage Village, Verigin, Saskatchewan.

The L. N. Tolstoy Statue was unveiled at an annual religious day of observance, known as "Heritage Day" on July 18-19, 1986, at the Heritage Village, Verigin, Saskatchewan.

The statue is a symbol commemorating the famed Russian novelist philosopher and reformer. Tolstoy unquestionably came to the rescue of the people of Doukhobor faith in Czarist Russia, during the time of oppression and severe persecutions by the Czarist regime and the Russian state-controlled Orthodox Church.

Tolstoy's appeal for amnesty for the Doukhobors was granted with permission for the Doukhobors to immigrate from tyranny to freedom to the Canadian North West.

The statue is one of two identical works presented to Canadian Doukhobor groups by the Society Rodina of the USSR. The other statue is placed on the grounds of the Castlegar Doukhobor Museum, Castlegar, British Columbia.

The event was hosted by the Verigin Doukhobor Heritage Society. In attendance were Soviet dignitaries from the Soviet government's cultural ministry. Other guests were Yuri Chernoff, the sculptor Ilya Tolstoy, a great grandson of Leo Tolstoy. Federal and provincial government representatives were in attendance and participated in the historical event.

A religious day of observance is held annually in the latter part of July at the National Doukhobor Heritage Village in Verigin Saskatchewan. This day is known as "Heritage Day" commemorating the "Doukhobor Heritage of the past with a traditional overtone of the present. This event attracts people from all walks of life to a program similar to that of "St. Peter's Day" and is sponsored by the Verigin Doukhobor Heritage Society.

Facing Page *Royal visit of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth and His Royal Highness Duke of Edinburgh at the National Doukhobor Heritage Village Verigin Saskatchewan October 19 1987*
Photo Author

Cultural Identity

Succeeding generations of Independent Doukhobors of Canadian origin with the greater concentration of descendants residing in areas where their predecessors first settled in Saskatchewan in 1899 are in such areas as Blaine Lake Langham Saskatoon Watson Wadena Kylemore Buchanan Pelly Canora Verigin Kamsack Yorkton etc Other settlements may be found in Benito Manitoba and in the province of Alberta in areas such as Cowley Lundbreck Taber etc

Others spread across the length and breadth of the nation in various occupations of their trade and profession in their everyday lives

A number of families that migrated south of the 49th parallel into the states of Oregon and California maintain a close and friendly association with the Independents of Saskatchewan

Each community possesses a centre for their religious and cultural activities and is known as a Prayer Home Each society is independent of each other The activities and function of a society is administered by an elected board known as Trustees from its membership, elected in a three-year term rotation at a yearly annual meeting

Several elders are appointed at the annual meeting to assist the elected trustees in the society's various functions and in conducting Sunday prayer services and religious observances funerals weddings etc

An annual membership levy is assessed on each member of approximately ten dollars per member, or as the need arises. All services for the sustainment of a Society are voluntary by its membership. Various committees are appointed to direct the society's religious, cultural and social activities.

Attempts were made to preserve the Russian language by providing Russian instruction after regular school hours by the Independent Doukhobors when instructors were available, as the public school system did not offer instruction in their heritage language.

After several decades, the descending generations of Doukhobor background and Canadian origin through intermarriage with younger generations of various cultural identity and due to the process of democratic lifestyle in the progress and development of our nation, it was evident that Russian language became a barrier to the younger generations. To maintain an understanding and provide continuity of the Doukhobor Faith, its heritage and cultural identity, various books and materials were written and published in the English language on Doukhobors and their lifestyle of the past and present.

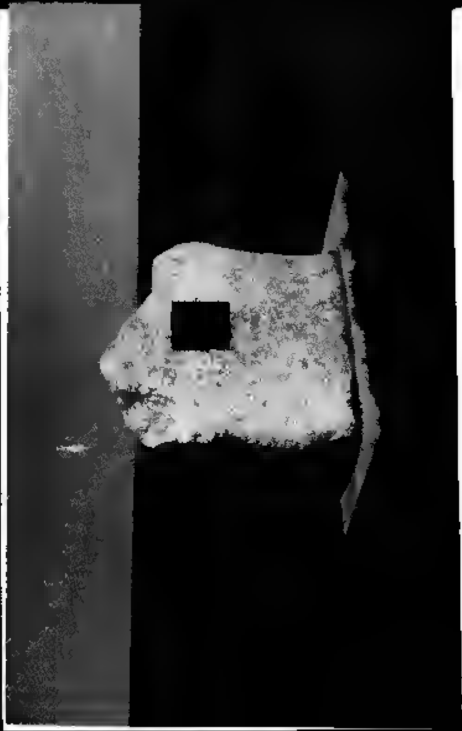
To preserve the cultural heritage and provide continuity of Doukhobor Faith, Sunday school lessons are provided in prayer homes in Russian and English for younger age groups of children of Doukhobor descent. Instruction is provided by volunteer individuals from within the membership of the society knowledgeable of Doukhobor principals and ideology.

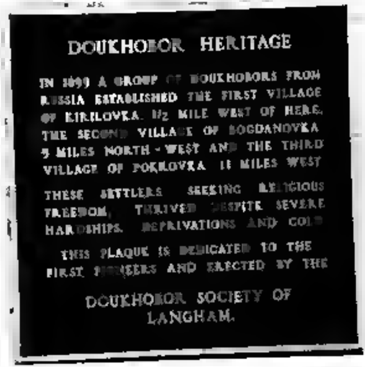
In relevancy to the ideals of Doukhobor faith and their religious doctrines, the complete text of Doukhobor Ideals and Psalms was translated from Russian to the English language. The translated version became available in 1978 titled, "Book of Life of Doukhobors," Translated Version 1978.

The translated version will preserve and extend the philosophical heritage and surmount the linguistic barrier for the younger generations of Doukhobor background, and will

enable people of other cultural descents to better understand Doukhobor ideals.

The project for the translation of the Book of Life was created, coordinated and published by Sam George Stupnikoff. Dr. V. O. Buyniak, Department of Slavic Studies, University of Saskatchewan, was engaged for the translation of the Book of life from the Russian to the English language. The translation was reviewed and edited by a committee of Doukhobor descent, prior to its publication.





DOUKHOBOR HERITAGE

IN 1899 A GROUP OF DOUKHOBORS FROM RUSSIA ESTABLISHED THE FIRST VILLAGE OF KIRILOVKA 1/2 MILE WEST OF HERE. THE SECOND VILLAGE OF BOGDANOVKA 5 MILES NORTH - WEST AND THE THIRD VILLAGE OF POKROVKA 11 MILES WEST

THESE SETTLERS SEEKING RELIGIOUS FREEDOM, THRIVED DESPITE SEVERE HARDSHIPS, DEPRIVATIONS AND COLD

THIS PLAQUE IS DEDICATED TO THE FIRST PIONEERS AND ERECTED BY THE

DOUKHOBOR SOCIETY OF
LANGHAM.

Facing Page *Cairn commemorating Doukhobor Village settlments in the southern portion of the Prince Albert Doukhobor Reserve Langham area 1899–1907 Cairn location five kilometers west of the town of Langham along highway no. 16 (Yellow Head)*
Photo Author

Traditions and Communication

The special traditions of the ethnocultural community include the Pioneer Era of Doukhobor bread baking in outdoor ovens at the annual Prairie Land Exhibition in Saskatoon Saskatchewan in the early part of the month of July At this event bread is baked in permanently established outdoor ovens on the exhibition grounds Bread is sold to the general public by the loaf or by the slice with a coating of butter or jam Beverages such as tea or coffee are also available This annual event of bread baking attracts tourism from various parts of our continent This event is sponsored by the Saskatoon Doukhobor Society

The annual Saskatoon Folkfest of which the Saskatoon Doukhobor Society is a part of is held in the latter part of August each year The Doukhobor pavilion is one of many ethnocultural pavilions

In the Doukhobor pavilion one will find Doukhobor traditional foods served such as Borsch Doukhobor bread that was baked in outdoor ovens perogi with sour cream or butter and non-alcoholic beverages such as tea coffee etc One will also find a display of various Doukhobor handcraft such as weaving of linen on handcrafted looms the spinning of wool various displays of art work portraying Doukhobor past history sale of souvenirs pins and published books on Doukhobors etc

The pavilion doors open from 4 p m to 12 p m in the week of the event from Wednesday through Saturday A program of entertainment is staged every hour, consisting of choirs singing folk songs and traditional hymns, duets and solos and a narration of Doukhobor past history. Traditional Doukhobor dress of the past is worn by choir groups and individual participants.

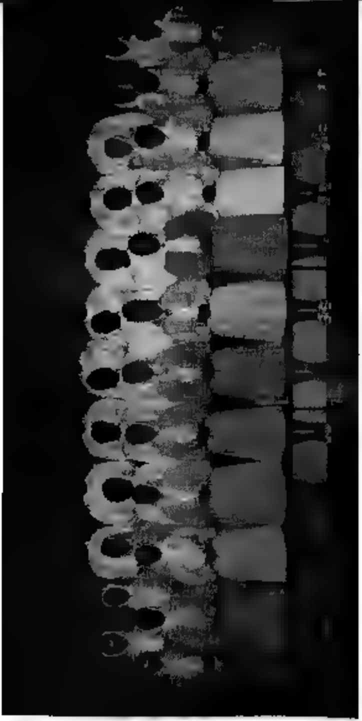
The Blaine Lake and Saskatoon Ladies Clubs are charitable organizations from within the membership of the respective Doukhobor societies. Semi-annual bazaars and bake sales are held, also donated handicraft items are sold, and the event also promotes an afternoon tea, with an atmosphere that creates an enjoyable afternoon for all those attending and is open to the general public.

Funds derived from these events are donated periodically to charitable organizations, such as the Heart Fund, Cancer Fund, Red Cross, Hospital Foundations, orphanages, etc. The Blaine Lake Doukhobor Ladies Club contributed financially to Third World countries for the education of underprivileged children.

The Blaine Lake/Saskatoon Doukhobor Choir has been in existence since early 1950's and was first organized in Blaine Lake from third and fourth generation descendants of the Independent Doukhobors. Over the years a number of members moved to Saskatoon where several members from the Saskatoon and Langham Doukhobor Societies joined the choir. Over the years the choir provided an opportunity for younger generations to participate as members of the choir.

The choir has been active participating in various functions, prayer services, funerals, weddings, public concerts, competitive and non competitive festivals. The choir has also made a number of good-will tours throughout Saskatchewan and also tours to British Columbia. To preserve the cultural heritage of the Doukhobors the choir produced two albums being a collection of traditional psalms, hymns and folk songs suitable for a variety of occasions.

The group remains active in the 1990's although time has taken its toll of several members from the choir The voluntary efforts of the choir members can more accurately be defined as a "good-will group."



A traditional hymn that was composed by
the Doukhobors titled

"In Honor of Peace and Freedom"

(Translated Version)

Let us honor Peace and freedom's triumph
Over strife and age-old hate aflame
World wide brotherhood is now the answer
Love forgiveness let us all proclaim

Tears and sorrow terror agitation
Let them stay forever in the past
Chains oppression hate and exploitation
Shall deface the earth no more at last

We'll assemble as one human family
And create a brotherhood of man
Toil and Peace shall be our foremost emblem
Love shall reign supreme in all the land

From one far horizon to another
Let our universal slogan be
"Brothers all in love we stand united
And attain man's highest dignity"

Let us honor Peace and freedom's triumph
Over strife's and war's immortal sin
We'll forget past sorrows and misfortunes
And to Love our thankful praises sing

Facing Page *Blaine Lake / Saskatoon Doukhobor Choir 1969 Photo*

The Independents took keen interest in the affairs of their local communities and served as reeves councillors school board trustees rural telephone company directors co-operative organizations in various social organizations and also in the field of sports and entertainment

Education

People of Doukhobor faith migrated from Czarist Russia where the predominant language was Russian. Some difficulty was experienced during the migration period and the settlement on their new frontier where English was the spoken language. For the first years communication and understanding of the Canadian governments' citizenship and land regulations were not clearly defined, and a misunderstanding was evident on both sides.

During the period of communitarian life on the prairies, the Russian language and cultural identity was maintained without difficulty. In 1907 by re-enactment of the Hamlet Clause, the community lifestyle of Doukhobors no longer prevailed.

The Society of Friends "Quakers" from London, England sent in 1901 Michael Sherbinin, a Russian expatriate nobleman, to the Prince Albert Colony to begin teaching Doukhobor children to read and write in English and to do simple arithmetic. He first taught in the villager's houses in the Petrovka village. His efforts in teaching attracted more students from the surrounding villages. This resulted in the building of a permanent two-room school in the Petrovka village by the British Quakers. The students attending the Petrovka village school were children of the Independent Doukhobors.

In 1909, the government began establishing rural public school districts in the more populated areas of the province. This was to initiate a permanent form of education in the

English language, with a regulation enacted whereby any child, upon reaching the age of seven years, would be required to attend those schools in which school district the family resided.

Some of the schools that were built in the vicinity of the former Doukhobor village sites acquired the name of that particular village such as Slavanka School District No. 2279, Ospennia School District No. 2386, Harilowka School District No. 2396, Petrofka School District No. 23, etc.

The form of education as prescribed by the government was welcomed by the Independent Doukhobors. The attendance of their children in the English schools provided their parents with an opportunity to familiarize themselves with a language that was predominant in the province and the nation.

The implementation of the public education system in Saskatchewan did not meet the approval of the Old Colony Mennonites in the Rosthern Mennonite Reserve. Their form of education in their private village schools was instruction in the German language, as it formed the basis of their religion and lifestyle. Due to subsequent political changes relating to the re-interpretation of the Hamlet Clause, government interference was evident in the Rosthern Mennonite Settlement in 1909. The government made available for general settlement all the land that was not occupied by Mennonites, thus eliminating all reserve boundaries. Government interference in German schools by replacing them with English speaking public schools proved intolerable to many conservatively-minded Old Colony Mennonites.

In their respect, German instruction would maintain and preserve Mennonite culture. In 1922 some five hundred and fifty Mennonites who were dedicated to their culture left the Rosthern Reserve and migrated to Mexico and later to South America.

The Mennonites that remained continued to farm, with some families moving to their individual homesteads while others lived in villages, and each farmed their individual land.

The experiment by the Canadian government of settling the open prairies with groups of experienced agricultural people proved very beneficial at that time. Revisions in the government's political atmosphere in the early 1900's were incompatible and proved disastrous towards the lifestyles of the Mennonites and the Doukhobors.

Peter G. Makaroff, who was one of the students that attended the Petrovka village school, later graduated from the College of Law. Mr. Makaroff was the first Doukhobor to obtain a degree in law. In his law practice over the years, Mr. Makaroff attained a high degree of respect from the legal profession and all those that were acquainted with him.

Other Independents, by the 1930's, from studying at universities were graduating into various forms of trade and occupation. This trend continued over the decades and into the 1990's. Students graduated as doctors, dentists, lawyers, chartered accountants, in education as superintendents, principals, teachers, consultants, guidance counsellors, in agriculture as agricultural representatives and highly efficient farmers, etc.

The highest number of Doukhobor students graduating from universities over the years emerged from the Independent Doukhobor settlement of the Blaine Lake area.

Conclusion

The Doukhobor story has been presented by many journalists who have stressed the eccentricities of Doukhobor society. The Doukhobors are a small ethnic minority group, a tiny vessel in an ocean of protestant and non protestant faiths defending their position with mainly pacifistic tactics encountered adverse publicity. The Independent Doukhobors have been the most adapted group and have almost been ignored by Canadian writers.

Thus the Doukhobor cultural identity has endured the eccentricities of the past until now. With the advent of a new generation of young people, aware of their destiny, it shows signs of a healthy, vigorous future. Instead of abandoning their cultural inheritance, the Doukhobors, in applying traditional concepts to their modern everyday lives have grown to appreciate the fundamental values and beliefs of their forbears.

The Independent Doukhobors' efforts were to achieve a relationship of mutual understanding, respect and friendship with the society surrounding them, so as not to assimilate in the cultural division but to integrate and live in harmony as part of Canada's multi-cultural mosaic.

A CFQC Saskatoon television production written and directed by Carol Bleakin titled "Saskatchewan Doukhobors" in 1987 was televised on CTV's affiliate of stations across the nation. The production, as received by the nation's viewers, was consistent with Doukhobor cultural identity and lifestyle of the past and present. It was the first such production in the ninety years of Canadian Doukhobor history identifying Saskatchewan's Independent Doukhobors.

As we approach in the 1990's the 100th anniversary of the "Burning of Arms" by people of Doukhobor Faith "1895 - 1995," may we reflect on the high ideals and a doctrine of religious form of Peter Vasilievitch Verigin and his followers. Adhering to the Commandment "Thou Shalt Not Kill," they torched a glowing flame at the hour past midnight on June 29, 1895, an undaunted example in protest to militarism and all forms of violence. It was a symbolic act marking their total renunciation of taking life and an unprecedented example of true Christianity.

The severe persecutions that were encountered by their decisive stand from the Czarist State and Church authorities received world wide attention from humanitarians around the world—a message that is firmly undisputed for peaceful co-existence of the human race.

In the final decades of the 20th century, world nations have acquired through scientific research and technology what is now termed as the "Nuclear Age," an energy of superior magnitude in unprecedented form. With the uncertainty and fear as it exists amongst nations in the political atmosphere of the world, vast arsenals of nuclear weapons have been produced and amassed by nations of super powers and military might.

These arsenals are maintained for the purpose of defence and aggression, and in the event of conflict, possess a potential of instant global annihilation and destruction of all forms of life on earth.

The era of the "Nuclear Age" rekindled the dying embers of the glowing flame, torched by the people of Doukhobor Faith in the final decade of the 19th century. In their message as proclaimed: "nations must beat their swords into plow shares for future generations of all nations to live in harmony under an umbrella of peace and brotherhood."

The Nuclear Era instills fear and subjects humanitarians and peace activists to march in scores by the thousands in major centers throughout the world during a time of crisis. It is an undaunted example in protest to militarism and all forms of violence, a symbolic act marking their total renunciation of taking life, an unprecedented example of true christianity. It is a message firmly undisputed for peaceful co-existence of the human race.

The virtually utopian concepts achieved by the Doukhobor community undoubtedly inspired the observation in the Encyclopaedia Britannica. This describes the Doukhobors as "industrious and abstemious in their lives and, when living up to the standard of their faith, present one of the nearest approaches to the realization of the Christian ideal which has ever been attained."

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About the Author...

Sam George Stupnikoff is a semi retired farmer, a community minded individual, a translator, an author and a family man. He was born in 1919, and raised on the original homestead (1915) of the Stupnikoff family and still maintains this original family farm. He was actively involved in leadership roles in community and municipal affairs, in the Doukhobor Society of Blaine Lake and currently serves as an Elder in the Saskatoon Doukhobor Society. He has an avid interest in the history of the Doukhobor faith and its people, and in the history and settlement of other ethnic minorities in the pioneer era. In keeping with his concern to preserve the Doukhobor faith and to avail it to future generations, he created and co-ordinated a project in the translation of the "Book of Life" from the Russian language to the English language. The translated version, entitled "The Book of Life of the Doukhobors" was published in 1978 for the benefit of younger generation Doukhobors, as well as the population at large. This publication is currently in use in many major academic institutions in Canada and the U.S.A. His second publication, "The Historical Saga of The Carleton Region, 1797–1920," provides the history of the settlement and hardships encountered by some of the ethnic minorities within that region. This book is currently being used in the Social Studies curriculum in Saskatchewan. "Toil and Peaceful Life" is written in tribute to the people of the Doukhobor faith, the commemoration of the one hundred year anniversary of the "Burning of Arms," and a celebration of ninety years, in the status of independence of the Doukhobors living in the province of Saskatchewan.

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STORICAL SAGA OF
DOUKHOBOR FAITH
1750–1990s

Toil and Peaceful Life

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1992
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ROBA

BY SAM GEORGE STUPNIKOFF

COMMEMORATING
"THE BURNING OF ARMS" 1895
SASKATCHEWAN'S INDEPENDENTS 1902–1992

Dedication

To the memory of our parents
for their Christian ideal of
Universal Brotherhood while
living through these decades
of trial and triumph

Cover Design by
Agatha Stupnikoff
Titled
TOIL AND PEACEFUL LIFE

Commemorating Doukhobor Heritage

HISTORICAL SAGA
OF THE
DOUKHOBOR FAITH 1750–1990s

DOUKHOBOR MOTTOS

Toil and Peaceful Life	The Welfare of all Nations is not worth the life of one child

The Doukhobor "BOOK OF LIFE" in the beginning was partly composed independently and partly formed out of the contents of the Bible. It consists of sacred hymns and psalms that were transmitted orally and lived in memory.

"RECORD IN YOUR HEART, PROCLAIM IN WORD"

Researched, Compiled and Published
by
Sam George Stupnikoff

Commemorating "THE BURNING OF ARMS" 1895

Saskatchewan's Independents 1902–1992

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HISTORICAL SAGA OF THE DOUKHOBOR FAITH
1750–1990s
TOIL AND PEACEFUL LIFE
by Sam G. Stupnikoff, Blaine Lake, Saskatchewan

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The highlites of the condensed and comprehensive history of the Doukhobors are entirely my own selections. The information is factual to the best of my knowledge from oral interviews, recollections of the past, and to the accuracy of the sources identified herein.

Sam George Stupnikoff

Prelude

The Doukhobors emerged into history around the middle of the eighteenth century. Early in their philosophical development the Doukhobors began to recognize that it was wrong to use icons, ceremonies, religious symbols and embellishments of the Russian Orthodox Church. They sought religious freedom in the simple teachings of Jesus Christ, and began to worship God "in spirit and truth." They would sooner give up their personal possessions and suffer persecution than break the commandment, "Thou Shalt Not Kill."

In 1785, Archbishop Ambrosius of the Russian Orthodox Church, in an effort to identify a group of dissident Russian peasants as heretics, referred to them as "Doukoborsti." The term means "spirit wrestlers." The priest intended it as a derogatory label meaning that these people were struggling against the Holy Spirit.

The dissident Russian peasants adopted the name Doukhobors but gave it their own interpretation saying, "We are Spirit Wrestlers because we wrestle with and for the Spirit of God."

Doukhobor history is marked by efforts that brought their beliefs into practice in every-day life. Doukhoborism can more accurately be described as a way of life, rather than a religion.

Doukhobors aspiring to pacifism developed many unique cultural customs and traditions while living as a group for

several centuries. The most moral achievement by the Doukhobors was inspired by the high ideals of their spiritual leader Peter Vasilievitch Verigin. They made a decisive stand against militarism and all forms of violence. On June 29, 1895 they piled and burnt all the arms and weapons they possessed—a symbolic act of total renunciation of taking life.

During this symbolic act, the Doukhobors encountered harsh oppression from the Czarist State and the Russian Orthodox Church authorities. They were beaten and tortured, and the freedom and privileges of their lifestyle no longer prevailed. The survivors were exiled and marched to northern Siberia and held in detention under extremely harsh conditions.

The harsh act of oppression against the Doukhobors by the Czarist State received world-wide attention from the people of Protestant faith with pacifistic ideals. Sufferings of such proportions attracted humanitarians such as Count Leo Tolstoy, a famed Russian novelist, as well as the Society of Friends ("Quakers") in England and America. Because of the earnest appeal by Tolstoy and the Society of Friends to the Czarist State for a reprieve for the Doukhobors, the same was granted by the Czar of Russia, Nicholas II. This reprieve permitted the Doukhobors to emigrate to a land where they could live within the concept of Doukhobor ideals of non-violence and pacifism, free of oppression.

The Doukhobors emigrated to the barren Western Canadian Territory in 1899 with a glowing tribute to their slogan of "Toil and Peaceful Life."

Burning of Arms
June 29, 1895

The burning of arms had taken place near several villages such as Spasowka and Slavyanka in the Kars region. However, the largest concentration for the burning of arms had taken place in the wet mountain region in the Republic of Georgia, two miles from the village of Orlowka.

A huge pile of wood was made and on to it were laid all the arms and weapons that were in possession of the Doukhobors which was then sprayed with kerosene. A torch was set to the pile. The Doukhobors then assembled into a "V" formation around the burning pile and chanted psalms into the early dawn of June 29, 1895. The authorities of the Czar became aware of the burning, and the Cossacks came upon them two thousand strong. The Sergeant in command delivered the Governor's ultimatum to the elders. The Governor's ultimatum was that the Doukhobors appear before him in the village of Bogdanovka, some ten miles away. The elders replied, "We are praying. If the Governor wishes to speak to us, he may come to us, for he is alone and we are many." This enraged the Sergeant and he turned the Cossacks on them. The horsemen galloped upon them swinging their lead-tipped whips as the Doukhobors tightened their ranks. After three charges, the bruised and the bleeding were herded into marching formation. Chanting psalms, they were marched to the village of Bogdanovka where the Governor was waiting.

The enraged Governor was to command the Cossacks to open fire on the Doukhobors but Count Korpinski intervened, halting the Cossacks of what seemed the certainty of extermination of the Doukhobors

Severe persecutions followed this event, with the most severe being endured in the Penal Battalion when the Doukhobors surrendered their army documents and laid down their arms They were flogged with thorny rods, with the thorns remaining in their flesh, and were thrown into cold dark cells After several days they were brought to the Chaplain who required them to adhere to the Orthodox Rites which the Doukhobors had renounced on the premise that no one or anything is Holy. The Doukhobors replied "Holy is the Heavenly Father, Creator of All and to Him we shall abide" Their position was unbearable. They were acting by their own conviction and on the advice of their Spiritual Leader Peter Vasilievitch Verigin, who was in exile. Many perished in the persecution, but the majority was convinced and held out and were later exiled into Siberian Russia

From that day June 29, 1895, the Doukhobors portrayed their courage and determination to adhere to the Commandment "Thou Shalt Not Kill" by defying government authority to serve in the Militia and refusing to administer the Oath of Allegiance to the State The Doukhobors said that their allegiance was to their Creator the Heavenly Father, and to Him alone

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Facing Page Burning of Arms June 29th, 1985—*from an oil painting by Agatha Stupnikoff Artists perception from oral research of the historic event also recollections from those that survived persecution and oppression*

From the Book of Life of Doukhobors
Translated Version 1978

This "Defence of a Christian" was composed by the Transcaucasian Doukhobors in 1894 when they refused to fulfill military duty and other government requirements.

Psalm 374

A Christian's Defence

"I am not going to give you my oath, nor am I going to serve you, because I am a Christian. I do not wish to kill my brethren nor force them to commit violence, according to the words of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ. I consider all people living on earth as children of one Father and therefore my brothers. Our Lord and God, Jesus Christ, forbids us to take an oath. Read the Gospel of Matthew, chapter twenty three. You will find there that the Lord forbids us to swear, and swearing is taking an oath. Even the law does not permit me to serve you, because as a Christian, I should not prepare myself willingly to slay my brothers. Read the Ten Commandments. It is written there: "though shalt not kill, nor steal, nor commit adultery." Our Lord Jesus Christ also gave us two commandments orally. The first commandment says: "Thou shalt love The Lord God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind — this is the first and great commandment." The second one says: "Thou shalt love thy brother and neighbour as thyself." On these two commandments rests all the law of God."

The Doukhobors had chosen the date of June 29, 1895, for the burning of the arms because it was a date commemorating the birth date of the Martyrs of early Christianity, the Apostles St. Peter and Paul, and the birth date of their Spiritual Leader, Peter V. Verigin, who was born on June 29, 1859.

On the date of June 29th, a religious observance is held by the people of the Doukhobor Faith in each calendar year commemorating the historic event of the "Burning of Arms." It is known as St. Peter's Day.

Facing Page *George (Greesha) Chernoff of Doukhobor Faith at the age of 86 standing beside the Cairn at the official unveiling ceremonies on June 14 1959 He was the last surviving forefather who endured the oppression and severe physical persecution, by the Russian state controlled Church and the Czarist Regime for their religious beliefs while observing the Commandment "Thou Shalt Not Kill" Deeply embedded lash scars along his back, were evidence of the severe persecutions from which many had perished, and those who survived preserved the spirit which guided them from tyranny to freedom in their exodus to the Canadian prairie region. He passed away at the age of 92 years*

Standing on the left by the Cairn is Simeon Zbitnoff, on the right is Jack Perehudoff pioneers of the immigration era. Jack Perehudoff homesteaded River Lot 1, Twp 45 Rge 5 – W 3rd Mer which was the site of the French fur trading post, Fort La Montée built in 1797 Photo courtesy Saskatchewan Archives Board Saskatoon Star Phoenix Collection S–SP B 5103 13

Sleep on You Brave Faithful Eagles

(translated version)

This hymn was composed by the Doukhobors to commemorate those who did not survive the severe persecutions following the historic event, the "Burning of Arms."

This hymn is occasionally sung at the conclusion of Sunday prayer services and on the religious day of observance on June 29th, commemorating St. Peter's Day.

Hymn

"Sleep on you brave faithful eagles,
Sleep in the arms of the Lord
You have received from your master
Peace and the promised reward

Now on this hard earned pathway,
Easy for us 'tis to tread,
You paid the price they exacted,
So we could journey ahead.

Many and cruel were the tortures,
You took in Siberian plains,
In Tundrian regions you suffered
Dreadful and sad were your days.

Today as we think of your suffering
And of the hardships you pssed,
We pray to abide by your message
And join the great common task.

Sleep on you brave faithful eagles,
Sleep in the arms of the Lord,
We shall overcome all temptation,
And follow Christ and His word."

Immigration

Prince Khilkov who made the official link between Tolstoy and the Doukhobors, served as an officer with the regiment of Russian Guards In 1877 78, he was stationed in an area near the Doukhobor villages He was impressed by the Doukhobor way of life and was convinced by their arguments against the forms of Russian Orthodox religion

His aristocratic existence was indiscreet by their teachings He resigned from the army and settled to live amongst the Doukhobors Khilkov for his adversary action, was arrested and exiled to the Caucasus Khilkov occasionally visited some four hundred Doukhobor families that lived in exile in the Caucasus His presence in the Caucasus was deemed undesirable by the Russian authorities for his continued association with the Doukhobors

Khilkov was permitted to leave Russia along with two exiled Doukhobor families, Ivan Evin and Peter Makhortov The two families were representatives of the Caucasian Doukhobors in search of land for relocation and permanent settlement England or America were the preference of the Doukhobors

The attempt by the Doukhobors in 1897 to settle on the island of Cyprus which was British territory, was a disappointment as the climate was extremely hot and the soil too sandy

The party departed as dissidents The Russian authorities warned them that they would not be permitted to return They arrived in England on July 2, 1898, where Chertkov's Tolstoyan committee convinced them that Canada would be the most desirable place for the Doukhobors to settle

Chertkov was a pacifist and an advocate of Leo Tolstoy His appeal for amnesty for the Doukhobors from the Czar created annoyance As an adversary of the Russian State he was arrested however, Chertkov's influence in the Court allowed him to leave the country in 1890 As an anti-Czarist expatriate, Chertkov travelled to England where he set up a Tolstoyan colony at Purleigh, in Essex

Arrangements for the Doukhobors' migration to Canada began in the third month of 1898 News was received in London England, that the Doukhobors were granted permission to leave Russia

The welcomed news resulted in great activity amongst the friends of the Doukhobors The Society of Friends (Quakers) set up a special committee to work in cooperation with the Tolstoyan Committee in England to assist the Doukhobors in the selection of a suitable place for settlement In correspondence with the Doukhobors, they favored Western Canada for settlement The Canadian government was publicizing the uninhabited Western Frontier in Great Britain

The Tolstoyans were aware of the favorable conditions the Old Colony Mennonites had obtained for settlement on the prairies They had received their land in a large block, instead of quarter sections as compared to the individual settlers under the Dominion Lands Act This enabled them to maintain their own form of communal organization and lifestyle by settling in villages instead of each being required to reside on his own homestead

Tolstoy was a friend of James Mavor a professor of political economy at the University of Toronto and an expert on the prairies and immigration

In his letter of March 31, 1898, Tolstoy informed James Mavor that the Doukhobors were prepared to immigrate to Canada. Tolstoy stressed three points which the Doukhobors would expect assurance: No obligation to military service, no interference into the internal organization of the Sect, and block land grants where the Doukhobors could live communally, because they could not live on isolated farms. Tolstoy assured Mavor that the Doukhobors were excellent farmers and that the Doukhobors would send their children to school, provided that the children would not receive religious training at the schools.

Tolstoy's letter, and a letter from Chertkov's Tolstoyans, stimulated an existing interest on Mavor's part. Mavor suggested independently to the Minister of the Interior, Clifford Sifton, that the Doukhobors would fit admirably into his plans for accelerated settlement of the prairie regions. The experiment of settling the prairie regions with groups of people, including the Old Colony Mennonites in 1874, proved beneficial to the Canadian government, as individual settlers shunned the open prairies for reasons of survival.

An appeal was made to Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, by the Society of Friends to grant refuge for the Doukhobors in their new country where they could have their religious freedom and permanent settlement. Her Majesty responded to this appeal and granted refuge, permitting the Doukhobors to migrate to Canada with full religious privileges including exemption from military service.

With Tolstoy's letter and a letter from the Tolstoyan Committee in hand, Mavor intensified his negotiations with Sifton and the Minister for Immigration, William McReary, advising them specifically the expectations of the Doukhobors, namely, exemption from military service, assurance that they could hold their land in large blocks, and the form of education that would be provided to their children.

In response to Mavor's efforts, the Ministers responded favorably advising Mavor that the Canadian Government was anxious to populate the unopened regions of the North West and assuring Mavor that the Doukhobors would be permitted to settle in the unopened region The concessions enacted for the Old Colony Mennonites by the Canadian government in the late 1870s would be re-enacted for the Doukhobors as their expectations were broadly similar

Before Tolstoy and the Tolstoyans received replies to their letters from Mavor, a Doukhobor delegation of Ivan Evin and Peter Makhortov their wives and children accompanied by Alymer Maude and Khilkov, sailed from Liverpool, England, to Canada on the *S S Vancouver* on September 1, 1898 Alymer Maude, who was a carpet merchant in Russia for many years and a friend and translator for Leo Tolstoy, had returned to England in 1897 Maude was to act as the official representative of the Doukhobors. The two families were to be examples of the well behaved Doukhobors for the Canadians to observe

Upon arrival at the Quebec harbour on September 10 1898, the delegation proceeded to Ottawa to meet with Sifton and Canadian authorities In their discussions, it was made quite clear that the Doukhobors would be required to conform with statistical provisions by registering marriages births, etc As well they would be given the advantages of the Militia Act, namely, exemption from military service, and the Hamlet Clause permitting them to reside in villages

Ottawa Ontario
September 22, 1898

Mr Sifton to Professor Mavor

Dear Sir

I have your letter of the 26th Ultimo and I have read with interest what you say in regard to the Doukhobors I had a conference with Mr Maude on my way from Winnipeg and went into details with him to some extent I hope to be able to do something to assist in the removal of these people to the North West Territories where I am satisfied they would become useful citizens I have

to thank you for your kindness in forwarding information at your disposal and beg to remain

Yours faithfully

(Sgd) Clifford Sifton

While Maude continued negotiations in Ottawa, Khilkov and the Doukhobor delegation set out for the prairies in search of the best area for settlement William McCreary Minister of Immigration in Winnipeg provided them with information and arranged for guides. Unable to find a single block of suitable land large enough to settle as one colony, they accepted land in three blocks Two of the blocks were in the Assiniboia Territory The North Colony consisted of six townships, seventy miles north of Yorkton The South Colony consisted of fifteen townships, thirty miles north of Yorkton The third colony was in the Saskatchewan Territory near Prince Albert, consisting of twenty townships, and was known as the Prince Albert Doukhobor Reserve

In the Prince Albert reserve, the even-numbered sections were to be homesteaded by Doukhobors, while the odd-numbered sections were to be selected by the railways

The Doukhobors were willing to endure the hardships of a new beginning The open and untamed Canadian prairies were the new horizons where the Doukhobors hoped to live within their beliefs, free of oppression

PRIVY COUNCIL CANADA

(Extract from a Report of the Committee of the Honourable Privy Council approved by His Excellency on December 6, 1898)

On a Report dated 30th November 1898 from the Minister of the Interior stating that arrangements have been completed with Mr Alymer Maude of London England, the representative of the sect of Russians known as Doukhobors who now inhabit the slopes of the Caucasus in Russia, for the immediate emigration to Canada of several thousands of these people That from a despatch dated 27th May 1898, addressed to the Foreign Office by Her Majesty s Consul at Batoum it would appear that since their settlement in the region of the Caucasus the Doukhobors have by their good behavior diligence sobriety and hard working qualities, brought nothing but prosperity to the barren localities in which they were originally settled, but as from religious doctrines they are averse to bearing arms, an exemption which the Russian Government has refused to countenance, they have been permitted by the latter to depart from Russia.

The Minister, under the circumstances, and considering that the Doukhobors would appear to be a most desirable class of settlers to locate upon the vacant Dominion Lands in Manitoba and the North West Territories, is of the opinion that it is expedient to give them the fullest assurances of absolute immunity from military service in the event of their settling in this country.

The Minister submits that subsection 3 of Section 21 of the Militia Act, Chapter 41 of the Revised Statutes of Canada, contains the following provision:

> "Every person bearing a certificate from the Society of Quakers, Mennonites or Tunkers, and every inhabitant of Canada of any religious denomination, otherwise subject to military duty, who, from the doctrines of his religion, is averse to bearing arms and refuses personal military service, shall be exempt from such service when balloted in time of peace or war upon such conditions and under such regulations as the Governor in Council from time to time, prescribes."

The Minister recommends that under the power vested in Your Excellency in Council by the above provisions, the Doukhobors, settling permanently in Canada, be exempted unconditionally, from service in the Militia, upon the production in each case of a certificate of membership from the proper authorities of their community.

The Committee submit the same for your Excellency's approval.

John J. Myers,
Clerk of the Privy Council

(Signed)
The Honorable

The Minister of the Interior

The substantial accord that was reached with Canadian authorities was confirmed by the Deputy Minister of the Interior, James Smart, in a letter to Alymer Maude. On October 5, 1898, Maude and Khilkov cabled Chertkov and the Tolstoyans in Purleigh that arrangements could begin for bringing the Doukhobors to Canada.

Tolstoy's son Sergei, who was consulting with the Tolstoyan committee in England, immediately travelled to Batum, a port on the Black Sea, in the Republic of Georgia, to assist the British Consul in Batum in the transfer arrangements.

Two ocean freighters, the *Lake Huron* and her sister ship the *Lake Superior* were commissioned for the transfer of approximately 7400 Doukhobors in four contingents to Canada.

The two ocean going vessels were converted to accommodate the transfer with the help of a number of Doukhobor men who were experienced sailors. The first contingent was under the care of Sergei Tolstoy.

Funds for the transfer of Doukhobors were contributions from the Tolstoyans, Quakers, and from the scanty Doukhobor property. The largest amount was provided by Leo Tolstoy. He collected it mainly from wealthy Russians. His own contribution was derived from his latest novel "Resurrection," for which he gained world-wide attention and was awarded the world renowned Nobel Prize. Tolstoy was excommunicated from the Russian Orthodox Church for his philosophical convictions of pacifism and his association and support of the Doukhobors.

On December 21, 1898 the *Lake Huron* steamed out from the Port of Batum with the first party of 2134 Doukhobors from the Wet Mountain Region of Georgia enroute to the Canadian port of Halifax. The *Lake Huron* sailed across the Black Sea, then entered and sailed across the Mediterranean Sea, which was deceptively smooth.

Life aboard ship was well organized. While the women washed clothes and prepared food, the men went about tasks apportioned to them. Since the ship was short-handed and in order to save expenses, some of the men who had formerly been sailors were assisting as a supplementary crew.

In the mid-Atlantic Ocean, the ship encountered a severe eight-day storm. Many of the Doukhobors were incapacitated by seasickness and were terrified by this strange new illness. Many feared they would never reach land. Ten from their party who hoped to find a new and happier life in Canada had been put to rest in the sea. The gale-force wind subsided three days before they reached land. The Doukhobor men cleaned down the ship with such zest that Canadian authorities remarked, they had never seen so well a kept ship come into the Halifax harbour.

In the afternoon of January 23, 1899, after a voyage of 33 days, the *Lake Huron* anchored at the port of Halifax. At that moment, the Doukhobors burst forth with hymns of praise and thanksgiving. It was an impressive sight. The men, clean and stalwart, were clad in sheep-skin coats and caps while the women wore skirts of bright red or blue, heavy black jackets and white head shawls. The men and women presented a picturesque appearance.

James Smart, the Deputy Minister of the Interior, reporters from the Maritime newspapers, Quakers from the United States, Khilkov and the two original Doukhobor delegates came on board to officially welcome the Doukhobors to their new homeland. This was the largest single group in the history of migration to Canada. They were impressed with their first view of these East European immigrants, the well behaved children and the well kept ship.

James Smart, after officially greeting the Doukhobors, wrote in his report, "I was greatly struck with their politeness and general good behavior, even with the children. I could not but feel that they were people who in this respect might set a good example to other residents of Canada."

From Halifax, the *Lake Huron* sailed on to St. John, where the onlookers cheered as the Doukhobors first stepped on Canadian soil. They fell on their knees with their brows to the soil. Their spokesman explained to the onlookers that he

and his brethren were bowing to the "Spirit of God" that brought them and made them welcome in their new homeland

When the Doukhobors stepped on the land, the large crowd of curious onlookers cheered. The club women from Montreal welcomed them and presented the children with gifts of candy

Five trains of colonist cars were waiting to carry the Doukhobors on their long journey to the prairies. The proprietors of the railway companies were eager to recruit the Doukhobors for settlement on the vacant prairies. In their negotiations with Maude, they agreed to transport the Doukhobors from their port of entry to the nearest point of their settlements at the cost of six dollars per head

The first three contingents of Doukhobors, numbering approximately six thousand, were transported to the west. They were housed for several months in immigration halls located at Selkirk, Dauphin and Brandon, in Manitoba, as well as in Yorkton in the Assiniboine Territory. Their final destination was the two reserved blocks of land in the Assiniboia Territory

The latter of the two contingents were Doukhobors from the Yelizavetpol region. The last of the four contingents, numbering one thousand four hundred, were from the Kars region. They arrived in Canada on June 5, 1899. This contingent was transported to Winnipeg where they were housed in immigration halls. Their destination was three hundred miles west in the Saskatchewan Territory near Prince Albert, not far from the region of Louis Riel's Rebellion. While spending several months in immigration halls pending final arrangements for inhabiting their reserved land, the Doukhobor men acquired work when it was available to assist them financially in surviving the first harsh winter on the prairies

The fourth group of approximately one thousand four hundred, after their stopover in Winnipeg, proceeded West by train to settle in the Prince Albert Reserve. They arrived

at the Duck Lake station in the month of November with their meager belongings they had brought from Russia The group spent a long harsh Saskatchewan winter in makeshift homes and tents, with assistance from the Society of Friends "Quakers," in the United States The Quakers sent vital supplies of food and clothing for their survival through the first winter on their new frontier

Although 7,400 Doukhobors immigrated to Canada, approximately 12,000 Doukhobors chose to remain in Czarist Russia

THE MONTREAL DAILY STAR—SATURDAY JANUARY 21 1899

ARRIVAL OF DOUKHOBORS

THE MEN AND WOMEN PRESENTED A PICTURESQUE APPEARANCE

On Friday last the steamer *Lake Huron* arrived at Halifax with the first installment of the Doukhobors 2296 in number—1804 adults 492 children—after a voyage of twenty nine days from the south of Russia The decks of the vessel presented a picturesque appearance Men and women of all ages the men garbed in sheepskin coats fur leggings top boots and fur caps and the women dressed in red plaidlike skirts woollen comforters and sheepskin coats looked with curious eyes on the tug boat sent down to meet them

The *Lake Huron* left Halifax about 6 o'clock Sunday for St John arriving on Monday afternoon at 4 o'clock They brought with them about 250 tons of baggage The ship docked at Sand Point the wharves in the vicinity being alive with people anxious to get a look at the immigrants

There were seven marriages and one birth on the voyage The marriages were in the form customary with the Doukhobors no ceremony being performed The men selected the women of their choice, and those chosen being willing that constituted the marriage ceremony In this manner five couples were made happy early on the voyage of *Lake Huron*

There were eleven sick people on the vessel who were in such a condition that the authorities did not feel like forwarding them arrangements were made for their admission to the public hospital The government will pay all expenses One of the sick people a women is suffering from peritonitis A man is ill with pneumonia The other ones are not serious An interpreter has been left with them

The scene is the C P R warehouse Monday night and early yesterday morning where moral will never be forgotten by those who saw them At different parts of the warehouse might be seen what looked like a pile of sheep or goat skins but underneath those skins were different families of Doukhobors who were having a sleep until such time as they would be called to embark on their train

The arrangements for feeding the party from their departure here

until they arrive at their destination required considerable forethought and care. In each train were 100 pounds of cheese, 12 pounds of tea, 1 barrel of sugar, 50 bars of soap, 16 gallons of milk, 500 loaves of bread and 10 pounds of salt. At Ottawa three days provisions will be taken for the journey west. Each train is supplied with the following utensils: Two water casks, two half barrels, 14 dozen teaspoons, 5 dozen cups, 14 dozen plates, 5 mixing pans, two cheese knives, five coffee boilers, two tin pails, one box of matches, two sacks, two brooms, one table, one pan, nails, a hatchet, sugar scoop, one bundle wrapping paper four large blankets and 25 yards towelling

The first train carrying 410 people left Sand Point for Winnipeg at 8.25 Monday night. The second train, with 212 for Winnipeg and 296 for Yorkton, got away at 12 00 a.m. Tuesday morning. The third train had 125 for Winnipeg and 279 for Portage La Prairie, the fourth with 417 for Brandon and the fifth with 430 for Dauphin. Only the personal baggage was allowed on these trains, the heavy baggage being sent on a special train.

The C.P.R. officials here have been notified that the steamer *Lake Superior* which sailed eight days after the *Lake Huron*, has on board 1 990 souls

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Public Archives Canada

DOUKHOBORS ARRIVAL

TOLSTOY'S PETS ARRIVE IN THE HALIFAX HARBOUR
JANUARY 21ST 899

GREETED BY AMERICAN QUAKERS

Representatives of the Society of Friends Show Strong Emotions on Hailing the Exiles—Affecting Scenes

HALIFAX JAN 20 — The steamer *Lake Huron* with 2 300 Doukhobors from Batum on board is entering the harbour

The arrival of the *Lake Huron* to-day at Halifax makes her voyage almost a month long from Batum which port she left on December 22 After passing Quarantine here she will immediately be taken to St John where six trains of ten cars each are waiting to convey the Doukhobors in a four day's trip over land

Deputy Minister of the Interior Smart received word that the *Lake Superior* which is bringing out the second lot of Doukhobors had on board 1 989 souls but had not been reported from Gibralter She may however passed about January 16 It is hardly possible that the *Lake Superior* may reach here only a few days behind the *Lake Huron* and if she should the landing of over 4 000 people in such a short time will not tax the energies of the department or the railways for both are fully prepared

reprinted from an original newspaper clipping
Public Archives Canada

WITHIN THE VEIL.

HALIFAX, JAN 20 — The steamer *Lake Huron* with 2,000 of the 5,000 Russian Quakers, known as the Doukhobors or "Tolstoy's Pets," who are immigrating to the Canadian North-West, arrived in Quarantine this evening. The passengers will remain on board to-night. To-morrow they march ashore to the Lawlor's Island Quarantine station, to undergo inspection. In the afternoon the steamer will re-embark her human freight and proceed to St. John where they will land and take the railroad to their future home. There were ten deaths (infants) on the passage from Batum, Russia. There is one case of measles on board isolated. Otherwise the ship's passengers have now been throughout remarkably free from contagion of every kind.

The Doukhobors were greeted by a party of their representatives in America, notably the Russian Prince Khilkoff, and Messrs Elkington of Philadelphia and Gildey of Dartmouth, Mass.

Prince Khilkoff said the French government offered free transportation for the Doukhobors to settle in a French colony. The offer, however, was declined, as these people prefer to settle in Anglo Saxon dominions, where they will not be subject to conscription.

When the ship came to anchorage in the spacious waters of Halifax harbour the Doukhobors gazed with interest on their surroundings. They were mainly undemonstrative and had a stolid appearance. They seemed comfortable and showed some pleasure of their safe arrival. They wore skin garments and caps. Mr Elkington, of Philadelphia, and other Quakers, who received them, wore the broad brimmed hats peculiar to their sect. They wept with emotion, as their boat approached the side of the big steamer, and they called to the people leaning over the rail, "Welcome Doukhobors!" At the head of the gangway the scene was affecting. The immigrants recognized Prince Khilkoff and crowded around him, all eager to hear him speak and to kiss him. A striking feature was the psalm chant in solemn service. The chanting began by the passengers themselves as the ship slowly came to anchor.

The singing was strong and remarkably pleasant. It was interrupted by the Prince's advent on board. They gave him a place in the services, which were conducted by Mr. Elkington, who with streaming eyes and face raised to the blue sky and with outstretched arms, seemed deeply moved. This service consisted of prayer and supplicaton.

Everybody was uncovered, notwithstanding the chilly atmosphere. The singing of the hymn was then resumed. The burden of the chant, as translated from the Russian by Prince Khilkoff, was "God is with us. He has brought us through." Only a short stay on the deck of the steamer was permitted. Certain quarantine officials will remain on duty to-night. Very few Doukhobors speak English, and a large portion cannot read or write owing to the lack of early advantages.

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reprinted from an original newspaper clipping
Public Archives Canada

Pioneer Settlement

As the snow melted on the prairies in the spring of the year 1900, through the yellow beaten grass the wild prairie crocus emerged. The Doukhobors began to move out of the immigration halls and temporary shelters to the open prairie frontier to land that was reserved for their habitation. They knew that it was necessary to get accustomed gradually to the living conditions in a new country and that the first years of pioneer life would challenge the muscle and mind of the new settlers. They experienced difficulty in communication, as Russian was the only language they spoke.

The Doukhobors established temporary encampments from which the settlers would spread out to their individual villages. The selection for the building of the village sites was made by the Doukhobors from various areas of the reserved land. The locations were near heavily wooded areas with an abundant supply of fresh water for the villagers.

The heavy timbers were to be cut and hewed for the building of village homes. Each village would consist of approximately fifteen homes, each house large enough to accommodate from four to six families. The population of each village was to be approximately 120 people.

The houses were build of hewn logs with sod-thatched roofs. The walls were smoothly plastered with a mixture of clay mud and dry prairie grass or straw. The structure of each dwelling

was one large room. In the centre of the floor was a large plain stove to supply the heat.

The beginning of toil and peaceful life for the new settlers, free of oppression and government interference in their new land, began with a majority of young able-bodied men, trekking back to Winnipeg. They were employed in railway gangs during the summer months to earn the much needed income for the purchase of livestock and equipment. The remaining began the construction of village sites with the help of the elderly men, women and children.

Self-sufficiency helped the Doukhobors survive during the first years on their new frontier. Prairie sod was cultivated with hand-guided plows built by the villagers and drawn by oxen. Furniture was made out of hand-hewn wood. Utensils, such as spoons, were carved out of wood. The spinning of linen thread was woven on handmade looms and made into homespun cloth. Wool was spun for handknitted garments such as sweaters, stockings, mittens, gloves, etc. Grist mills for the grinding of grain into flour were built near several village sites.

The Doukhobors, being totally vegetarians, relied on their gardening skills for the production of the necessary essentials of food for their livelihood. The Doukhobors made as much progress as could be expected by the time winter of 1900–1901 came upon them. A majority of villages were established and homes were built, some of the land was broken, and the crops they planted were harvested. This provided them with income

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Facing Page *Volunteer Doukhobor women pulling a hand guided plow of their own accord in the spring of 1900, breaking enough virgin sod for the planting of gardens. All able bodied men were occupied in the construction of village dwellings, while others trekked to Winnipeg to acquire work with the construction gangs on the railroad. This was the communitarian lifestyle of the Doukhobors.*

Action of this nature by Doukhobor women occurred only in one instance, in their new settlements on the Western prairies.

Photograph courtesy Saskatchewan Archives Board

from the harvested grain, together with the income that was earned from railway employment, to purchase a few livestock and a few more implements.

Petrovka was one of the first villages built in the Prince Albert Doukhobor Reserve, on the west bank of the North Saskatchewan River, being Section 30, Township 43, Range 6, West of the 3rd Meridian. (It is one of the focal points in the history of our province.)

The government of the North West Territories in 1901 established a ferry near the site of the Petrovka village to facilitate Doukhobor communities for access to markets in Rosthern some 30 miles away. It was first named the Doukhobor Ferry and later renamed to Petrofka, commemorating the village. With an increased volume of traffic, the Petrofka Ferry site was selected for the construction of a bridge to span the North Saskatchewan River in 1959 by the Department of Highways and Transportation. The "Petrofka Bridge" was officially opened to traffic on September 26, 1962, ending the era of the "Petrofka Ferry" crossing.

The village of Rosthern was located along the Qu Appelle Long Lake Saskatchewan Railroad in the Rosthern Mennonite Reserve. The reserve contained 24 townships of land which the Old Colony Mennonites settled on in 1897. The Mennonite Reserve was bordered from the east bank of the North Saskatchewan River while the Prince Albert Doukhobor Reserve was bordered by the west bank of the North Saskatchewan River. These two groups with broadly similar beliefs and lifestyles, maintained no association, while living adjacently in the Milky Waters Region in the Republic of Georgia, and later on the Canadian prairies.

The Old Colony Mennonites, while living in the Republic of Georgia adjacent to the Doukhobor settlements, had

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Facing Page *Petrofka Bridge, open to traffic September 26, 1962, a focal point in the history of the Province of Saskatchewan.*
Photo Author

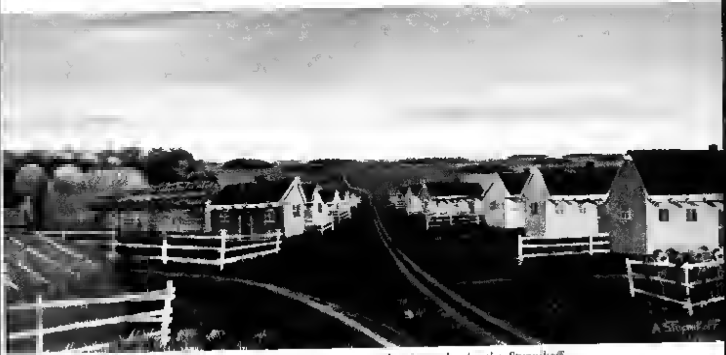
incurred in consequence the displeasure of the Russian Government and had been obliged by an official notification of the Governor of Tbilisi to confirm to the conscription law or to leave the country. The Mennonites chose to leave Russia and immigrated to Canada, establishing their communal settlements in two separate areas in the province of Manitoba in 1874. Being religious pacifists, the Canadian Government enacted special concessions for the Mennonites: the "Militia Act," being exemption from the militia, and the "Hamlet Clause," which was not a special concession to the Mennonites but accorded them with modifications of The Dominion Land Act before their immigration to Canada. In the late 1870's the act had been amended by the addition of the Hamlet Clause to facilitate the settlements of Mennonites.

The "Hamlet Clause" was re-interpreted for the Doukhobors prior to their emigration to Canada in 1899.

The clause read as follows:

> "If a number of homestead settlers, embracing at least twenty families with a view to greater convenience in the establishment of schools and churches, and to the obtainment of social advantages of like character, as to be allowed to settle together in a hamlet or village, the Minister may, in his discretion, vary or dispense with the foregoing requirements as to residence, but not as to cultivation of each separate quarter section entered as a homestead."

During the period of 1900-1901, some 66 villages were built by the Doukhobors. They were scattered broadly over their reserved land. Approximately 2,757 individual entries were made by the Doukhobors for homestead lands in accordance with the Hamlet Clause. The Hamlet Clause allowed them to reside in their villages while making entry on homestead lands within a radius of 11 miles surrounding the village site. Although each homestead entry was made individually, the land was farmed communally by the Doukhobors.


A Stupnikoff

Doukhobor Village, 1901 *From an oil painting by Agatha Stupnikoff*

Doukhobor Villages

South Colony,
Assiniboia Territory,
35 Villages

Kyrillovo
Old Gorilloe
New Gorilloe
Moisayovo
Novo Troitzkoe
Ootishenie
Motvayovo
Kalmakovo
Blagosklonoe
Bisednoe
Novoe
Blagovishennie
Kapustina
Najersda
Smyrennie
Parkoratonoe
Otradnoe
Savelnoe
Spaskoe
New Pakrofka
Riduonovo
Terpennie
Vernoe
Blagodarnoe
Lubovnoe
Efromovo
Voskrisennie
Oobezhoennie
Troodoloobevoe
Tomboscoe
Petrovo
Vosnisennie
Prokoratonoe
Vaziennie
Slavnoe

North Colony,
Assiniboia Territory,
19 Villages

Troitzkoe
Oospennie
Archangelskoe
Perihodnoe
Pavlovo
Boghumdanoe
Gromovoe
Verra
Michaelovo
Vosnisennie
Hlebodarnoe
Pokrovskoe
Simeonovo
Osvoborsdennie
Lubomeernoe
Libedevo
Teehemeernoe
New Kaminka
Kaminka

Prince Albert
Colony, Sask.
Territory,
12 Villages

Karilowa
Bodanofka
Pakrofka
Petrovka
Oospennie
Slavyanka
Spasofka
Pasariofka
Large Horelofka
Small Horelofka
Troitzkaa
Terpennie

Doukhobor Village Names
were from their former
villages in Russia, where
a certain group lived

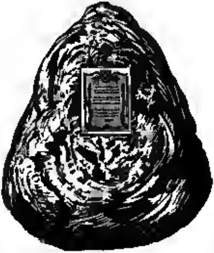
AN

HISTORIC SITE

PETROFKA FERRY

Unveiling

SUNDAY, JUNE 14, 1959
at 3:00 p.m., M.D.T.



TO COMMEMORATE MARKING THE SITE OF THE DOUKHOBOR FERRY, ESTABLISHED IN 1901, AND LATER RE-NAMED THE PETROFKA FERRY.

PETROFKA FERRY

This site was chosen not on the basis of the natural beauty of its location on the west bank of the North Saskatchewan river but because it was one of the focal points in the history of this Province. The rivers which had been the watering places for millions of buffalo, and the highways for the Indians and fur-traders, finally became barriers to the carts and wagons of the agricultural settlers, and to the railroads which began to advance across the prairies in the late nineteenth century. A railroad from Regina to Prince Albert, completed in 1890, brought settlers of mixed origin into the Rosthern area just east of this site.

In 1899 a group of settlers arrived from Russia whose story is unique even in the history of the colorful settlement of Saskatchewan. These were religious refugees known as Doukhobors, a pietistic, pacifist sect, who had maintained themselves in Russia for three hundred years against the powerful pressure of a state church and an absolute Czarist regime. When the pressure was increased in the late nineteenth century they were assisted to emigrate with the material help of the eminent Russian novelist Count Leo Tolstoy, the active assistance of the Quaker Society of Great Britain and the United States, and the co-operation of the Canadian Government. Among the seventy-five hundred who came to Canada some fifteen hundred were brought to this area and settled in the villages north and west of this site. This settlement was begun in August, 1899.

The Doukhobors suffered the hardships and difficulties common to all our pioneers. Their rugged beginnings were lightened by three factors, an outstanding capacity for hard work and shrewd planning, forms of mutual aid and co-operative arrangements, and the sympathetic help of outside friends. Among the friends were the Quakers already mentioned. This Society built a school house and supported its first teachers, among whom was a very remarkable woman Miss Ella Martin from Hamilton, Ontario and Herman I. Fast. The latter taught Russian. The remains of the stone foundations of the school house can still be seen on top of the hill west of the site.

In 1901 the government of the North West Territories established a ferry to facilitate east west communications. It was early known as the Doukhobor Ferry but later was called Petrofka after the former village in the immediate vicinity. The name means Peter's and was a common Russian designation in honour of the saint.

The Ferry proved a great convenience not only to the Doukhobors, but also to other settlers who began pouring into this area after the turn of the century. Many of the pioneer memories of all the people of this region are connected with this important river crossing. Petrofka Ferry is therefore one of the many focal points throughout our vast Province which is of special historical interest and significance.

Dr. G. W. Simpson.

PROGRAMME

CHAIRMAN T. L. HILL, *Deputy Minister,*
Dept. Travel and Information.

OPENING PRAYER (Our Father . . .)

INTRODUCTIONS

DOUKHOBOR SONG

ADDRESS BY HON. R. A. WALKER, Q.C.,
Attorney General

DOUKHOBOR CHILDREN'S CHOIR

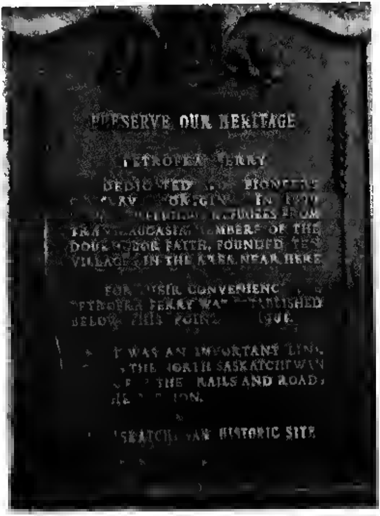
ADDRESS AND UNVEILING BY
P. G. MAKAROFF, Q.C.

ACCEPTANCE AND THANKS BY
JOHN ANDROSOFF, *President,*
Blaine Lake Doukhobor Society

DOUKHOBOR STUDENTS' CHOIR

GREETINGS FROM CANADIAN ASSOCIATION
OF SLAVISTS BY DR. J. B. RUDNYCKYJ,
President

TRADITIONAL COMMUNITY SONG
("We have concluded our Meeting")



PRESERVE OUR HERITAGE
PETROFKA FERRY
DEDICATED ... PIONEERS
... ORIGIN ... IN 1899
... REFUGEES FROM
TRANSCAUCASIA, MEMBERS OF THE
DOUKHOBOR FAITH, FOUNDED TEN
VILLAGES IN THE AREA NEAR HERE
FOR THEIR CONVENIENCE
PETROFKA FERRY WAS ESTABLISHED
BELOW THIS POINT
IT WAS AN IMPORTANT LINK
THE NORTH SASKATCHEWAN
THE RAILS AND ROADS
SASKATCHEWAN HISTORIC SITE

Above *Bronze plaque mounted on the cairn near the site of the first Doukhobor Village and the Petrofka Bridge* Photo Author

Facing Page *Cairn overlooking the North Saskatchewan River west bank near the site of the first Doukhobor Village and the Petrofka Ferry. Cairn dedicated by the province of Saskatchewan*
Photo Author

Land Crisis

On the prairies were the new horizons where the Doukhobors had hoped to live a lifestyle within their beliefs. Their arrival was at a crucial time in the history of the Canadian prairies. The Canadian government was in the process of solidification. Untamed prairie wilderness where every community was law within itself had died with Louis Riel and the fallen Metis in the rebellion of 1885, "Battle of Batoche."

The Doukhobors played a considerable part in opening the west, not only by breaking and cultivating large areas of land, but also by building many miles of vital railway links often under conditions that other workers were unwilling to accept. Though many Canadians were hostile from the beginning, those who actually visited the Community were more inclined to be impressed than otherwise because of the ability of the Doukhobors to achieve so much in so little time, and particularly from the use of modern machinery and the accumulation of livestock to enhance their agricultural operation. With Verigin's intellectual business approach and his powers of inspiring his followers, he drew many admirers wherever he appeared.

The year 1902 marked the turn of events in the Doukhobor communities with the government clearly wishing to break up the village pattern. As the first approach, the government specified that if any man who lives in a village and cultivates his land more than three miles from the village in which he

lives, his homestead entry will be protected for six months to enable him to build and live on the land. If he does not build and live on the land within that time, his entry will be cancelled. This was the beginning of erosion of Verigin's vision of a communitarian enterprise on the prairies when a number of Doukhobor families preferring economic independency to the communitarian lifestyle left the villages and made entry on homestead lands. Conforming to The Homestead Act, they commenced living independently. They were therefore called the "Independent Doukhobors."

The Doukhobor homestead crisis between the government and the Doukhobors began in 1904. The Community Doukhobors ignored government authorities by failing to supply vital statistics, failing to conform with the Homestead Act, and also refusing to sign the Oath of Allegiance. They felt that the Oath of Allegiance would lead to conscription. The administering of oath was contrary to their beliefs. The demands of the Canadian government were not clearly understood by the majority of Doukhobors. The extent of limitations of conditions under which they came to Canada and their suspicions of government's action of law enforcement were a reminder of the oppression and persecution of the past.

The lack of detailed written agreements between the principal parties involved in the arrangement was eventually the product of great misunderstanding, since it enabled the Doukhobors to claim rights they did not legally possess, and Sifton's successor, the newly appointed Minister of the Interior, John Oliver, to act in ways not in the spirit of understanding reached in 1898.

The two territories of Assiniboia and Saskatchewan were absorbed into a new province in 1905 which became the province of Saskatchewan.

The influx of people of various origins into the prairie region began the settlement of the vacant lands surrounding the Doukhobor reserves. Land-hungry men from eastern Canada,

Manitoba and some from the United States, began to squat on unoccupied Doukhobor lands in expectation that they would soon be open to the public.

Resentment and prejudice towards the community lifestyle of the Doukhobors became evident by individual settlers outside the Doukhobor reserve boundaries. Their grievance attracted the attention of the new Minister of the Interior, Oliver, who replaced Sifton in 1906. The Conservative opposition to the Liberal government of Sir Wilfred Laurier at the time was highly critical of the concessions enacted for the Mennonites and the Doukhobors in respect to the addition of the Hamlet Clause to the Dominion Land Act regulations. The newly appointed Minister re-interpreted the Hamlet Clause and appointed a special commission headed by Reverend John McDougal, a Methodist minister. He was to enforce the homestead land regulations, and to investigate all land claims with full power to cancel entries at his discretion of those who did not conform.

Reverend McDougal, the Christian minister, upon visiting the Doukhobor villages went about his task of informing the Doukhobors. His presence was to enforce the homestead land regulations as re-interpreted by Sifton's successor, Oliver, relating to the Hamlet Clause. Thus all entries on homestead land in excess of a three-mile radius from the villages must be occupied by those families who made entry on the said land. They must conform to the Homestead Act by signing the Oath of Allegiance and failure to do so would result in the disposition of their lands.

The remaining land within a three-mile radius would remain for the Community Doukhobors and an allocation of 15 acres per family would be granted; however, this land would be held by the government for the protection of the Community Doukhobors only during the pleasure of the government.

The Doukhobors submitted petitions against the government's actions to the Prime Minister and the Minister

of the Interior. Professor James Mavor came to their defence with knowledge of conditions under which the Doukhobors were brought to Canada, that this action was a breach of faith. Negotiations between Reverend McDougal and Peter V. Verigin resulted in failure, with the Doukhobors refusing to accept McDougal's interpretation. Because of their religious faith as pacifists, they offered no further resistance. This began the dissolution of the Doukhobor reserves.

By the year 1907, all entries made on land by Community Doukhobors were cancelled by the government for failure to comply with the homestead land regulations. The cultivation and improvements on all cancelled Doukhobor homestead lands were disregarded and no compensation was awarded to the Doukhobors by the government as a result of the cancellation.

On June 1, 1907, some 258,880 acres were made available for entry to the general public at the Yorkton and Prince Albert Land Branch Offices. This resulted in a land rush such as had never before been seen on the Canadian prairies. The magnitude of the crowds of applicants for lands thrown open were approximately 236 homesteads at Prince Albert and 1364 at Yorkton. Consequently, the duties of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police included responsibility for the handling of the crowds and maintaining order. Their duties as prescribed were very trying.

In the years 1908 to 1910, some 3,000 Doukhobors adhered to the independence of individual farming by making

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Facing Page *Land rush at the Prince Albert land branch office for the improved abandoned Doukhobor lands in the Prince Albert Doukhobor Reserve, abandoned by the community Doukhobors due to re-interpretation of the Dominion Land Branch Act in 1907 with the cancellation of the Hamlet Clause.*

This began the dissolution of the Doukhobor villages and the reserve boundaries were open for homesteading to settlers of various origin. The community Doukhobors received no compensation for the homestead lands they improved.

Photo Courtesy Saskatchewan Archives Board

application for homestead lands that were a part of their community prior to the dissolution of the reserves. Conforming with Dominion Land regulations, they remained to farm as Independent Doukhobors of Saskatchewan.

The majority of Doukhobors who desired to continue a communal way of life left the province and moved to the Kootenay Valley in British Columbia, with their spiritual leader, Peter V. Verigin, where they acquired land for a new beginning. The stress of this transitionary period had resulted in a variety of changes. In the case of a small number of people known as "Sons of Freedom," their bizarre and tragic behaviour in protest to government law enforcement was completely incompatible with Doukhobor ideals of non-violence and pacifism. Their unethical behaviour received no recognition or support from the Independent or the Orthodox Doukhobors, their existence eventually diminished over the years

Statement re Doukhobor Homesteads

Ottawa, August 1, 1907

The Doukhobor Commission dealt with a total of 2,757 Doukhobor homesteads in Yorkton, Prince Albert and Regina agencies

There were cancelled on the recommendation of the Doukhobor Commissioner Doukhobor entries totalling	2,503
There were standing vacant Doukhobor homesteads which had previously been cancelled to the number of	79
There were standing reserved as village sites	39
There were entries standing of independent Doukhobors numbering	136
Total in three districts	2,757

Statement re Disposition of Doukhobor Homesteads

Ottawa, August 1, 1907

Following is a memorandum showing how the 2,757 Doukhobor homesteads dealt with by the Doukhobor Commission have been disposed of

Set apart as reserves for Doukhobor communities		768
Under entry to independent Doukhobors		384
Thrown open to the general public		
Taken to date	1,211	
Still untaken	394	1,605
		2,757

Spiritual Leaders

A group of Russian peasants, titled as "Icon Wrestlers" first emerged in Southern Russia in the early part of the 18th century. Their radical rejection of churches and priesthood said "it was wrong to worship icons, embellishments and religious sacraments." Their neglect of the Bible in favour of their own orally transmitted doctrines meant that no one is born to, or vested with, powers for the absolution of sin. The indwelling of the Spirit of God is in every man. They did not accept the sacrament of baptism, a general popular, Christian one. A baptism with water is not beneficial to our soul, for our soul baptism means that one accepts God's word, we are baptized by Christ in the name of the Holy Spirit. A baptism with water cleanses the body only and not the soul. This completely divorced them from the Russian Orthodoxy. They developed unique cultural customs, traditions and lifestyles that spread throughout Southern Russian.

The first of their profound leaders was Silvan Kalesnikov in 1750. After his passing in 1775, the Icon Wrestlers acknowledged Ilarion Pobirokin as their leader. After Pobirokin's death in 1792, he was succeeded by Savelii Kapustin.

During Kapustin's leadership occurred the first major investigation of the Doukhobors by Russian authorities. While living in communes, they did not merely cling obstinately to their faith, but they attracted other Russian peasants and people of other origins, such as Finns, Swedes, Ukrainians, as well

as the Russian Cossacks and military personnel, who abandoned the militia to live amongst the Doukhobors

The decision of the authorities was to banish these sectarians to prevent any further influence of other people They were dispersed to various regions of the empire The area chosen was in the province of Taurida, an open frontier along the Milky Waters, where Tartars occasionally roamed Their only neighbors were the Mennonites who preceded them.

With the death of Kapustin in 1817, the Kalmykov ruling dynasty began, with Vasilii Kalmykov succeeding Kapustin as leader Kalmykov's leadership ended in 1832, and he was succeeded by his brother, Llarion Kalmykov Under their leadership, much of the fertile soil was broken and the Doukhobor communes thrived because of their experience as farmers

Peter Kalmykov, the last of the Kalmykov brothers, was named leader of the Doukhobors in 1845 He grew up to be a more dynamic personality than any of his predecessors who bore his family name Peter Kalmykov's contribution to Doukhobor history was his marriage in 1856 to Luker'ia Gubanova Luker'ia, with strength and will equal to that of her husband, had an intellectual character far surpassing his Under Peter Kalmykov's leadership, the Doukhobors were permitted to leave the province of Taurida and return to the uplands of Caucasus Many chose the wet mountain region, while others settled in the provinces of Yelezavitpol and Tbilisi Peter Kalmykov with failing health and before his death in 1864 named his wife, Luker'ia, as his successor to assume the role of leadership

Luker'ia Kalmykova was the first and only woman leader amongst the Doukhobors in all their history Her accession was unopposed. Her doctrine of spiritual leadership, kindness and wisdom gained her respect from all who knew her Luker'ia created unity amongst the Doukhobor villages and gained respect from government authorities for her attentive

Peter Vasilievitch Verigin, first leader of the Doukhobors in Canada.

approach to vital matters of relations with the non-Doukhobor people.

Peter Verigin, who was born on June 29, 1859, was the sixth son of Vasilii Verigin. His mother, Anastasia Verigin, was the granddaughter of Savelii Kapustin.

Peter Verigin, being the great-grandson of Savelii Kapustin an intelligent, educated and knowledgable of spiritual understanding of Doukhobor traditions,attracted the attention of Luker'ia Kalmykova. With failing health and impressed with Peter Verigin's dedication to Christian life and Doukhoborism, Luker'ia Kalmykova, expressed her wishes to village Elders that Peter Verigin inherit the leadership of the Doukhobors after her death. In January 1887 Doukhobors gathered in thousands by the grave of Luker'ia for a memorial service ending with six weeks of mourning. They sang psalms to commemorate their departed leader. When the service ended, Ivan Makhortov stepped forward and bowed before Verigin and called on the Doukhobors to acknowledge Peter Verigin as their leader in the spirit of Christ. Standing in a ceremonial "V," the Doukhobors bowed before Verigin, indicating their acceptance of Verigin as their Spiritual Leader.

Verigin's reforms in the Doukhobor pattern of living were to abstain from drinking alcohol, smoking, consuming meat, and thereby becoming vegetarians. Verigin renounced the Russian conscription law of the 1880's which was imposed on the Doukhobors, and instructed his followers to refuse military service. Verigin refused to take an oath of allegiance to the Czar, saying his allegiance was to God alone and "to Him I shall abide." Verigin's attitude created a displeasure for the Russian Authorities. He was arrested and sentenced to five years in exile in Shenkursk in the far northern province of Archangel. While in exile Verigin's followers from the Caucasus found their way by evading police and travelling under false passports to meet secretly with Verigin. Verigin's inspirational messages were in oral form in which he would speculate on the true Christian way of life and a religious form of communal living. With increasing pressures for Doukhobors to conform to the laws of the Russian empire, Doukhobors were willing to suffer oppression and persecution rather than yield to their demands.

A small party of Doukhobors who were not Verigin's followers often cooperated with the authorities and acted as informers. The Czarist officials hoped that by separating Verigin from his followers it would deprive them of any further inspiration to continue their resistance and gradually fall under the influence of the party that cooperated.

The decision of the authorities was to extend the exile sentence of Verigin and to further the distance between him and his followers. On November 4, 1894, Verigin was exiled to Northern Siberia. The final destination was a small village of Obdorsk, at the mouth of the river Orb on the Arctic Sea, approximately 3,000 miles from the Doukhobor settlement. As a political exile,

he was permitted to live in a small house on the edge of the settlement. This great distance did not discourage Verigin's followers as they still continued their secret missions to meet with him, as they did in the past.

When the Doukhobors began their immigration to Canada, Verigin was not permitted to join his followers and was detained in his Siberian exile. Verigin was released in the autumn of 1902, after 15 years in exile, and was told by the Russian authorities that he must immediately leave for Canada. His request was denied to see his wife and his son, Peter, who lived in the Caucasus. The British mission in St. Petersburg made arrangements for Verigin's entry into Canada. In Moscow, Verigin was welcomed by Tolstoy. This was Verigin's first meeting with a man from whom he learnt so much by reading his writings. Tolstoy admired Verigin for his powerful personality, with a mind that was quick, capable and profound. Tempered by his exiled life, he was widely read and was confident in the role as leader for which he was trained, in his younger years, by his predecessor, Luker'ia Kalmykova.

Verigin was well prepared for the task that awaited him in Canada. After meeting with Alymer Maude in Essex, England, Maude enlightened him on the situation he would be confronted with in Canada.

Verigin set sail and landed in St. John, where he was met by a Doukhobor delegation. On December 22, he reached Winnipeg where he met Acting Commissioners, Moffat and Crerar, the Yorkton immigration agents.

It was evident to the Canadians that Verigin was a very different kind of man than his followers. His whole expression was that of a man who suffered much and had triumphed over everything through his courage and constancy.

Verigin's attempt to put into practice his vision of an autonomous communitarian society on the prairies came in conflict with Canadian authorities, relating to the Dominion Land Act regulations.

Peter P (Chistiakov) Verigin, second leader of the Doukhobors in Canada

Verigin and a great majority of his followers in 1908 left the prairies and purchased land in the Kootenay Valley of British Columbia where their community was incorporated as the Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood. This permitted Verigin and some 5,000 of his followers to continue their communitarian life. On October 29 1924 Peter V. Verigin's reign over the Doukhobors of approximately 24 years ended when a railway coach in which he was travelling with eight other people through the mountains between Brilliant and Grand Forks mysteriously exploded. The story of this tragedy, as told in detail by Canadian journalists, led to no solution to the mystery.

The Orthodox Doukhobors of British Columbia chose their new leader at the six-week graveside memorial service of the late Peter V Verigin. He was Peter P (Chistiakov) Verigin, the son of their former leader. Peter Chistiakov inherited his father's

intelligence and completed his education at an institute in Tbilisi. He was accustomed to Doukhobor traditions while living with his wife, one daughter and one son, Peter, in the Doukhobor settlements of the Soviet Union. Verigin left his family to live with the Doukhobors when he departed for Canada. (Verigin's wife Anastasia passed away soon after Verigin settled in Canada.)

Verigin sailed to Canada and landed in New York on September 16, 1927, where he was met by the acting chairman of the Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood. They travelled to the South Colony of the Independent Doukhobors in Saskatchewan where he was welcomed in Doukhobor tradition by an overwhelming crowd as he stood on the balcony of his father's house, in the village of Verigin.

Verigin then visited other Doukhobor settlements on the prairies, including the stronghold of the Independent Doukhobors in Blaine Lake, Saskatchewan.

When Verigin arrived at his final destination in the Kootenay Valley of British Columbia, he was welcomed by thousands of his followers at a graveside service for his late father at Brilliant, B.C. Verigin then established his permanent home in his father's house in Grand Forks and inherited the large religious co-operative established by his father in 1908. It consisted of a timber operation, growing orchards of fruit, vegetables, constructing and operating a jam factory. The co-operative was facing problems internally and financially. Families began to leave the co-operative, establishing themselves in an individual lifestyle.

The downfall of the co-operative began in 1937 when two major creditors proceeded with foreclosure and issued eviction notices early in 1939. The creditors then sold the land to individual members of the Doukhobor community, on agreement of sale.

Verigin's philosophy of Doukhobors living in the midst of Canadian society was not in the vision of his father. Verigin

favoured individual ownership as compared to community oriented life. Peter P. Verigin's initiative brought most of his former community members together in a new organization, being the "Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ," also known as the Orthodox Doukhobors.

Verigin frequently visited communities of the Independents in Saskatchewan, and admired them for their positive initiative of transition by adapting to the Canadian lifestyle, while at the same time retaining their valuable heritage.

Verigin was well aware that the Independents were not subjected to his leadership. Verigin counselled young people of Canadian origin and followers of the Doukhobor faith to acquire all the positive, constructive aspects of knowledge and skills that were offered through formal education. He emphasized that education was the key to progress.

Peter P. Chistiakov Verigin, after his arrival in Canada, made arrangements for his 18 year-old grandson, John Voykin, to immigrate to Canada. John was born in the wet mountain region in the village of Orlowka and arrived in Canada in 1928. John received his education in the province of British Columbia and assumed the name John J. Verigin.

Peter P. Verigin, with failing health, was admitted into a Saskatoon hospital on January 1, 1939. After a short illness, he passed away on the 11th day of February. He was buried in Brilliant in the same tomb beside his father.

The attempt by the Orthodox Doukhobors to locate the son of Peter P. Chistiakov Verigin in the Soviet Union, was to assume the role of leadership and enhance the continuity of the Verigin dynasty in Canada. On November 14, 1957 the Orthodox Doukhobors received official confirmation of the death of the son of Peter P. Chistiakov Verigin, in the Soviet Union, from the Soviet State authorities through the International Red Cross.

On August 16, 1960, at an official religious ceremony at the Verigin tomb by the Orthodox Doukhobors, John J. Verigin, the grandson, was acclaimed Honorary Chairman of the "Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ."

John J. Verigin was awarded the "Order of Canada" in 1976 for his work for peace and mutual understanding between people of various ethnic backgrounds in Canada.

John J. Verigin with his wife and a family of three children live in the interior of British Columbia in the settlement where the former Verigins first lived.

Religion and Religious Observances

Independent Doukhobors do not submit to the hereditary leadership vested in the Verigin family which is accepted unquestionably by the majority of the Orthodox Doukhobors, members of the "Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ," who live in the interior of British Columbia

The Independents have maintained a friendly relationship with their counterparts the Orthodox Doukhobors in British Columbia The ideology and basic principals of their faith have not been altered and are maintained as that of their forbears

Doukhobor Prayer Services are held in what is known as the Doukhobor Prayer Home The prayer home is of plain design and architecture with no religious sacraments As one enters the Prayer Home there are two Doukhobor mottos hung on the front wall, the motto to the left of the wall reads "Toil and Peaceful Life," and the motto to the right on the wall reads "The Welfare of All Nations is not worth the Life of One Child "

For Sunday Prayer Services and religious observances a small ceremonial table is placed covered with a white tablecloth On it are placed a loaf of bread, water and salt signifying bread and water – "The Staff of Life", the salt – "Salt of the Earth " The men assemble on one side of the table and the ladies on the opposite side, facing each other in a "V" formation. Services commence with the reciting of religious prayers by volunteers of the congregation followed by the singing of psalms and religious hymns The Lord's Prayer is then recited by a volunteered individual from the congregation and followed by the singing of the Lord's Prayer by the congregation Prayer services are approximately three-quarters of an hour The religious psalms and hymns are sung without musical accompaniment A designated Elder conducts the prayer services Doukhobor choirs contribute to religious gatherings and also to cultural life as well

The Book of Life of Doukhobors
Translated Version 1978

PSALM 73

What Was the Purpose of Christ's Coming to Earth?

We believe in one God the Father, the Almighty Creator who created us heaven and earth![175] who created us and gave us light We confess to the heavenly God, because He is good because His mercy is eternal, because He forgives us all our transgressions We also worship the Father and the True Holy Spirit because our Father seeks such worshippers We worship our Father with our true spirit, because God is a Spirit[177] God is word, God is man[178] therefore are we worthy to worship Him We are also the participants of His life-giving, strange and immortal sacraments of Christ for the salvation of our sins

We are baptized with the word of God in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit Amen The paradise of the Holy Spirit is today upon us Let us take His cross and say save, Oh Lord, your people and bless us Lord, and reward us[179] We desire to establish ourselves firmly as sons of the Church of God For the Lord says this You are a temple of the living God I shall enter you and dwell in you, I shall be your God, and you my people[180]

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174 Comp "Epistle to the Hebrews," ch 11, v 1 Comp with question and answer 7 of Psalm 5 (See p 36 in the "Book of Life")
F n V B B

175 The Doukhobors call this Psalm "The Key of the Faith"
F n V B B

176 In the "Gospel" of John ch 4, v 23 and 24, it is said
"23 But the hour cometh and now is when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth for the Father seeketh such to worship Him "

"24 God is a Spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth "
F n V B B

The prayer home has banquet facilities in the lower level of the building where occasionally potluck dinners are held, and visitor entertainment, bazaars and afternoon teas, enhance cultural activity.

Religious observances are: Christmas, Easter, and there is also a significant religious day of observance in the Doukhobor faith, a day known as "St. Peter's Day." On June 29th of each calendar year, commemorating the event, special prayer services are held followed by an outdoor picnic lunch. Following the religious service, an afternoon program is held of choir singing by various age groups, and also visiting choirs from various areas of Saskatchewan, and on occasions from Alberta and British Columbia. Guest speakers are invited from various levels of government, such as civic, provincial and federal. Invitations are also extended to people of various origin and faith to share in the commemorative event which is alternated annually between Blaine Lake and Saskatoon.

On October 19, 1987, the Saskatchewan Doukhobors were privileged by the visit of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth and His Royal Highness to the National Doukhobor Heritage Village at Verigin, Saskatchewan. The former home of Peter Vasilievitch Verigin is a part of the Heritage Village and now designated a "National Doukhobor Museum."

When the Royal Cavalcade with Her Majesty arrived at the National Doukhobor Heritage Village, there was no traditional "Royal" gun salute as Her Majesty and His Royal Highness stepped from their limousine. The Doukhobors, being "conscientious objectors," welcomed the Royal Couple by singing the hymn "Precious Moments, To Us God Has Gifted" by the local choir from the Verigin area.

After a brief visit to the museum and chatting with numerous individuals from the large crowd in attendance, the Royal

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Facing Page *Prayer Home of the Independent Doukhobors located in the town of Blaine Lake, Saskatchewan.* Photo Author

Cavalcade departed while the choir sang the traditional hymn, "God Be With You Till We Meet Again."

A religious observance was held on the grounds of the National Doukhobor Heritage Village site on July 9, 1989, by the Doukhobors commemorating their ninety years in the province of Saskatchewan and Canada.

In attendance were the Lieutenant Governor for the province of Saskatchewan, the Honourable Sylvia Fedoruk, representatives from both Federal and Provincial governments, commemorating the historic event.

The occasion hosted descendants of Doukhobor faith, and people from other ethnic origin from across the vast Canadian Nation.

Facing Page: Verigin Museum and Tolstoy Statue, *from an oil painting by Agatha Stupnikoff.*

The Verigin Museum is the former home of Peter Vasilievitch Verigin. The museum portrays the finest example of Doukhobor architecture built in 1917, located on the grounds of the National Doukhobor Heritage Village, Verigin, Saskatchewan.

The L. N. Tolstoy Statue was unveiled at an annual religious day of observance, known as "Heritage Day," on July 18–19, 1986, at the Heritage Village, Verigin, Saskatchewan.

The statue is a symbol commemorating the famed Russian novelist, philosopher and reformer. Tolstoy unquestionably came to the rescue of the people of Doukhobor faith in Czarist Russia, during the time of oppression and severe persecutions by the Czarist regime and the Russian state-controlled Orthodox Church.

Tolstoy's appeal for amnesty for the Doukhobors was granted with permission for the Doukhobors to immigrate, from tyranny to freedom, to the Canadian North West.

The statue is one of two identical works presented to Canadian Doukhobor groups by the Society Rodina of the USSR. The other statue is placed on the grounds of the Castlegar Doukhobor Museum, Castlegar, British Columbia.

The event was hosted by the Verigin Doukhobor Heritage Society. In attendance were Soviet dignitaries from the Soviet government's cultural ministry. Other guests were: Uri Chernoff, the sculptor, Llya Tolstoy, a great grandson of Leo Tolstoy. Federal and provincial government representatives were in attendance and participated in the historical event.

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A religious day of observance is held annually in the latter part of July at the National Doukhobor Heritage Village in Verigin, Saskatchewan. This day is known as "Heritage Day" commemorating the "Doukhobor Heritage" of the past, with a traditional overtone of the present. This event attracts people from all walks of life to a program similar to that of "St. Peter's Day" and is sponsored by the Verigin Doukhobor Heritage Society.

Facing Page *Royal visit of "Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth and His Royal Highness Duke of Edinburgh" at the National Doukhobor Heritage Village, Verigin, Saskatchewan, October 19, 1987.*
Photo Author

Cultural Identity

Succeeding generations of Independent Doukhobors of Canadian origin, with the greater concentration of descendants residing in areas where their predecessors first settled in Saskatchewan in 1899 are in such areas as Blaine Lake, Langham, Saskatoon, Watson, Wadena, Kylemore, Buchanan, Pelly, Canora, Verigin Kamsack, Yorkton etc Other settlements may be found in Benito, Manitoba, and in the province of Alberta in areas such as Cowley, Lundbreck Taber, etc

Others spread across the length and breadth of the nation in various occupations of their trade and profession in their everyday lives

A number of families that migrated south of the 49th parallel into the states of Oregon and California maintain a close and friendly association with the Independents of Saskatchewan

Each community possesses a centre for their religious and cultural activities and is known as a Prayer Home Each society is independent of each other The activities and function of a society is administered by an elected board known as Trustees, from its membership elected in a three-year term rotation at a yearly annual meeting

Several elders are appointed at the annual meeting to assist the elected trustees in the society s various functions, and in conducting Sunday prayer services and religious observances funerals weddings etc

An annual membership levy is assessed on each member of approximately ten dollars per member, or as the need arises All services for the sustainment of a Society are voluntary by its membership Various committees are appointed to direct the society's religious cultural and social activities

Attempts were made to preserve the Russian language by providing Russian instruction after regular school hours by the Independent Doukhobors when instructors were available, as the public school system did not offer instruction in their heritage language

After several decades, the descending generations of Doukhobor background and Canadian origin through intermarriage with younger generations of various cultural identity, and due to the process of democratic lifestyle in the progress and development of our nation, it was evident that Russian language became a barrier to the younger generations To maintain an understanding and provide continuity of the Doukhobor Faith, its heritage and cultural identity various books and materials were written and published in the English language on Doukhobors and their lifestyle of the past and present

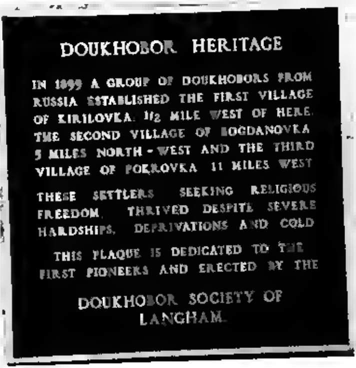
To preserve the cultural heritage and provide continuity of Doukhobor Faith Sunday school lessons are provided in prayer homes in Russian and English for younger age groups of children of Doukhobor descent. Instruction is provided by volunteer individuals from within the membership of the society, knowledgeable of Doukhobor principals and ideology

In relevancy to the ideals of Doukhobor faith and their religious doctrines, the complete text of Doukhobor Ideals and Psalms was translated from Russian to the English language. The translated version became available in 1978 titled, "Book of Life of Doukhobors " Translated Version 1978

The translated version will preserve and extend the philosophical heritage and surmount the linguistic barrier for the younger generations of Doukhobor background, and will

enable people of other cultural descents to better understand Doukhobor ideals

The project for the translation of the Book of Life was created, coordinated and published by Sam George Stupnikoff. Dr V O. Buyniak, Department of Slavic Studies, University of Saskatchewan, was engaged for the translation of the Book of life from the Russian to the English language The translation was reviewed and edited by a committee of Doukhobor descent, prior to its publication



DOUKHOBOR HERITAGE

IN 1899 A GROUP OF DOUKHOBORS FROM
RUSSIA ESTABLISHED THE FIRST VILLAGE
OF KIRILOVKA 1/2 MILE WEST OF HERE.
THE SECOND VILLAGE OF BOGDANOVKA
5 MILES NORTH - WEST AND THE THIRD
VILLAGE OF POKROVKA 11 MILES WEST

THESE SETTLERS SEEKING RELIGIOUS
FREEDOM, THRIVED DESPITE SEVERE
HARDSHIPS, DEPRIVATIONS AND COLD

THIS PLAQUE IS DEDICATED TO THE
FIRST PIONEERS AND ERECTED BY THE

DOUKHOBOR SOCIETY OF
LANGHAM.

Facing Page *Cairn commemorating Doukhobor Village settlments in the southern portion of the Prince Albert Doukhobor Reserve Langham area 1899-1907 Cairn location five kilometers west of the town of Langham along highway no 16 (Yellow Head)*
Photo Author

Traditions and Communication

The special traditions of the ethnocultural community include the Pioneer Era of Doukhobor bread baking in outdoor ovens at the annual Prairie Land Exhibition in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan in the early part of the month of July At this event, bread is baked in permanently established outdoor ovens on the exhibition grounds. Bread is sold to the general public by the loaf or by the slice, with a coating of butter or jam Beverages such as tea or coffee are also available This annual event of bread baking attracts tourism from various parts of our continent This event is sponsored by the Saskatoon Doukhobor Society

The annual Saskatoon Folkfest, of which the Saskatoon Doukhobor Society is a part of, is held in the latter part of August each year The Doukhobor pavilion is one of many ethnocultural pavilions

In the Doukhobor pavilion, one will find Doukhobor traditional foods served such as Borsch, Doukhobor bread that was baked in outdoor ovens, perogi with sour cream or butter, and non-alcoholic beverages such as tea, coffee, etc One will also find a display of various Doukhobor handcraft such as weaving of linen on handcrafted looms, the spinning of wool, various displays of art work portraying Doukhobor past history, sale of souvenirs, pins and published books on Doukhobors, etc

The pavilion doors open from 4 p m to 12 p m in the week of the event from Wednesday through Saturday A program of entertainment is staged every hour, consisting of choirs singing folk songs and traditional hymns duets and solos and a narration of Doukhobor past history Traditional Doukhobor dress of the past is worn by choir groups and individual participants

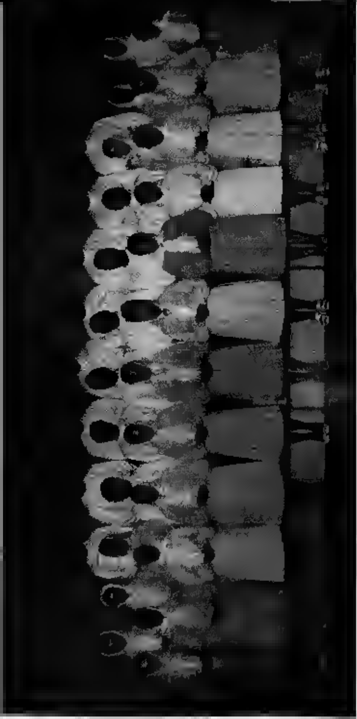
The Blaine Lake and Saskatoon Ladies Clubs are charitable organizations from within the membership of the respective Doukhobor societies Semi annual bazaars and bake sales are held, also donated handicraft items are sold and the event also promotes an afternoon tea with an atmosphere that creates an enjoyable afternoon for all those attending and is open to the general public

Funds derived from these events are donated periodically to charitable organizations such as the Heart Fund, Cancer Fund, Red Cross Hospital Foundations, orphanages etc The Blaine Lake Doukhobor Ladies Club contributed financially to Third World countries for the education of underprivileged children

The Blaine Lake/Saskatoon Doukhobor Choir has been in existence since early 1950 s and was first organized in Blaine Lake from third and fourth generation descendants of the Independent Doukhobors Over the years a number of members moved to Saskatoon where several members from the Saskatoon and Langham Doukhobor Societies joined the choir Over the years the choir provided an opportunity for younger generations to participate as members of the choir.

The choir has been active participating in various functions prayer services, funerals weddings, public concerts, competitive and non-competitive festivals The choir has also made a number of good will tours throughout Saskatchewan, and also tours to British Columbia To preserve the cultural heritage of the Doukhobors the choir produced two albums being a collection of traditional psalms hymns and folk songs suitable for a variety of occasions

The group remains active in the 1990's, although time has taken its toll of several members from the choir The voluntary efforts of the choir members can more accurately be defined as a "good-will group "



A traditional hymn that was composed by
the Doukhobors titled

"In Honor of Peace and Freedom"

(Translated Version)

Let us honor Peace, and freedom's triumph,
Over strife and age-old hate aflame,
World wide brotherhood is now the answer,
Love, forgiveness, let us all proclaim

Tears and sorrow, terror agitation,
Let them stay forever in the past
Chains, oppression hate and exploitation
Shall deface the earth no more at last

We'll assemble as one human family
And create a brotherhood of man
Toil and Peace shall be our foremost emblem
Love shall reign, supreme in all the land

From one far horizon to another
Let our universal slogan be
"Brothers all in love we stand united
And attain man's highest dignity"

Let us honor Peace and freedom's triumph,
Over strife's and war's immortal sin,
We'll forget past sorrows and misfortunes
And to Love our thankful praises sing.

Facing Page *Blaine Lake / Saskatoon Doukhobor Choir 1969 Photo*

The Independents took keen interest in the affairs of their local communities and served as reeves, councillors, school board trustees, rural telephone company directors, co-operative organizations in various social organizations, and also in the field of sports and entertainment

Education

People of Doukhobor faith migrated from Czarist Russia where the predominant language was Russian. Some difficulty was experienced during the migration period and the settlement on their new frontier where English was the spoken language. For the first years communication and understanding of the Canadian governments' citizenship and land regulations were not clearly defined, and a misunderstanding was evident on both sides.

During the period of communitarian life on the prairies, the Russian language and cultural identity was maintained without difficulty. In 1907 by re-enactment of the Hamlet Clause, the community lifestyle of Doukhobors no longer prevailed.

The Society of Friends "Quakers" from London, England, sent in 1901 Michael Sherbinin, a Russian expatriate nobleman, to the Prince Albert Colony to begin teaching Doukhobor children to read and write in English and to do simple arithmetic. He first taught in the villager's houses in the Petrovka village. His efforts in teaching attracted more students from the surrounding villages. This resulted in the building of a permanent two-room school in the Petrovka village by the British Quakers. The students attending the Petrovka village school were children of the Independent Doukhobors.

In 1909, the government began establishing rural public school districts in the more populated areas of the province. This was to initiate a permanent form of education in the

English language, with a regulation enacted whereby any child, upon reaching the age of seven years, would be required to attend those schools in which school district the family resided.

Some of the schools that were built in the vicinity of the former Doukhobor village sites acquired the name of that particular village such as Slavanka School District No. 2279, Ospennia School District No. 2386, Haralowka School District No. 2396, Petrofka School District No. 23, etc.

The form of education as prescribed by the government was welcomed by the Independent Doukhobors. The attendance of their children in the English schools provided their parents with an opportunity to familiarize themselves with a language that was predominant in the province and the nation.

The implementation of the public education system in Saskatchewan did not meet the approval of the Old Colony Mennonites in the Rosthern Mennonite Reserve. Their form of education in their private village schools was instruction in the German language, as it formed the basis of their religion and lifestyle. Due to subsequent political changes relating to the re-interpretation of the Hamlet Clause, government interference was evident in the Rosthern Mennonite Settlement in 1909. The government made available for general settlement all the land that was not occupied by Mennonites, thus eliminating all reserve boundaries. Government interference in German schools by replacing them with English speaking public schools proved intolerable to many conservatively-minded Old Colony Mennonites.

In their respect, German instruction would maintain and preserve Mennonite culture. In 1922 some five hundred and fifty Mennonites who were dedicated to their culture left the Rosthern Reserve and migrated to Mexico and later to South America.

The Mennonites that remained continued to farm, with some families moving to their individual homesteads while others lived in villages, and each farmed their individual land

The experiment by the Canadian government of settling the open prairies with groups of experienced agricultural people proved very beneficial at that time Revisions in the government's political atmosphere in the early 1900s were incompatible and proved disastrous towards the lifestyles of the Mennonites and the Doukhobors

Peter G Makaroff, who was one of the students that attended the Petrovka village school, later graduated from the College of Law Mr Makaroff was the first Doukhobor to obtain a degree in law In his law practice over the years Mr Makaroff attained a high degree of respect from the legal profession and all those that were acquainted with him

Other Independents, by the 1930's, from studying at universities were graduating into various forms of trade and occupation This trend continued over the decades and into the 1990s Students graduated as doctors, dentists, lawyers, chartered accountants, in education as superintendents, principals, teachers, consultants, guidance counsellors in agriculture as agricultural representatives and highly efficient farmers, etc

The highest number of Doukhobor students graduating from universities over the years emerged from the Independent Doukhobor settlement of the Blaine Lake area

Conclusion

The Doukhobor story has been presented by many journalists who have stressed the eccentricities of Doukhobor society. The Doukhobors are a small ethnic minority group, a tiny vessel in an ocean of protestant and non-protestant faiths, defending their position with mainly pacifistic tactics encountered adverse publicity. The Independent Doukhobors have been the most adapted group and have almost been ignored by Canadian writers.

Thus the Doukhobor cultural identity has endured the eccentricities of the past until now. With the advent of a new generation of young people aware of their destiny, it shows signs of a healthy, vigorous future. Instead of abandoning their cultural inheritance, the Doukhobors in applying traditional concepts to their modern everyday lives have grown to appreciate the fundamental values and beliefs of their forbears.

The Independent Doukhobors' efforts were to achieve a relationship of mutual understanding, respect and friendship with the society surrounding them, so as not to assimilate in the cultural division, but to integrate and live in harmony as part of Canada's multi-cultural mosaic.

A CFQC Saskatoon television production written and directed by Carol Blenkin titled "Saskatchewan Doukhobors," in 1987, was televised on CTV's affiliate of stations across the nation. The production, as received by the nation's viewers, was consistent with Doukhobor cultural identity and lifestyle of the past and present. It was the first such production in the ninety years of Canadian Doukhobor history identifying Saskatchewan's Independent Doukhobors.

As we approach in the 1990's the 100th anniversary of the "Burning of Arms" by people of Doukhobor Faith "1895–1995," may we reflect on the high ideals and a doctrine of religious form of Peter Vasilievitch Verigin and his followers. Adhering to the Commandment "Thou Shalt Not Kill," they torched a glowing flame at the hour past midnight on June 29, 1895, an undaunted example in protest to militarism and all forms of violence. It was a symbolic act marking their total renunciation of taking life and an unprecedented example of true Christianity.

The severe persecutions that were encountered by their decisive stand from the Czarist State and Church authorities received world-wide attention from humanitarians around the world—a message that is firmly undisputed for peaceful co-existence of the human race.

In the final decades of the 20th century, world nations have acquired through scientific research and technology what is now termed as the "Nuclear Age," an energy of superior magnitude in unprecedented form. With the uncertainty and fear as it exists amongst nations in the political atmosphere of the world, vast arsenals of nuclear weapons have been produced and amassed by nations of super powers and military might.

These arsenals are maintained for the purpose of defence and aggression, and in the event of conflict, possess a potential of instant global annihilation and destruction of all forms of life on earth.

The era of the "Nuclear Age" rekindled the dying embers of the glowing flame, torched by the people of Doukhobor Faith in the final decade of the 19th century. In their message as proclaimed, "nations must beat their swords into plow shares, for future generations of all nations to live in harmony under an umbrella of peace and brotherhood."

The Nuclear Era instills fear and subjects humanitarians and peace activists to march in scores by the thousands in major centers throughout the world during a time of crisis. It is an undaunted example in protest to militarism and all forms of violence, a symbolic act marking their total renunciation of taking life, an unprecedented example of true christianity. It is a message firmly undisputed for peaceful co-existence of the human race.

The virtually utopian concepts achieved by the Doukhobor community undoubtedly inspired the observation in the Encyclopaedia Britannica. This describes the Doukhobors as "industrious and abstemious in their lives and, when living up to the standard of their faith, present one of the nearest approaches to the realization of the Christian ideal which has ever been attained."

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About the Author...

Sam George Stupnikoff is a semi retired farmer, a community minded individual, a translator, an author and a family man. He was born in 1919, and raised on the original homestead (1915) of the Stupnikoff family and still maintains this original family farm. He was actively involved in leadership roles in community and municipal affairs, in the Doukhobor Society of Blaine Lake and currently serves as an Elder in the Saskatoon Doukhobor Society. He has an avid interest in the history of the Doukhobor faith and its people, and in the history and settlement of other ethnic minorities in the pioneer era. In keeping with his concern to preserve the Doukhobor faith and to avail it to future generations, he created and co-ordinated a project in the translation of the "Book of Life" from the Russian language to the English language. The translated version, entitled "The Book of Life of the Doukhobors" was published in 1978 for the benefit of younger generation Doukhobors, as well as the population at large. This publication is currently in use in many major academic institutions in Canada and the U.S.A. His second publication, "The Historical Saga of The Carleton Region, 1797–1920," provides the history of the settlement and hardships encountered by some of the ethnic minorities within that region. This book is currently being used in the Social Studies curriculum in Saskatchewan. "Toil and Peaceful Life" is written in tribute to the people of the Doukhobor faith, the commemoration of the one hundred year anniversary of the "Burning of Arms," and a celebration of ninety years, to the status of independence of the Doukhobors living in the province of Saskatchewan.

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STORICAL SAGA OF
DOUKHOBOR FAITH
1750–1990s

Toil and Peaceful Life

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1992
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ROBA

BY SAM GEORGE STUPNIKOFF

COMMEMORATING
"THE BURNING OF ARMS" 1895
SASKATCHEWAN'S INDEPENDENTS 1902–1992

Dedication

To the memory of our parents
for their Christian ideal of
Universal Brotherhood, while
living through these decades
of trial and triumph.

Cover Design by
Agatha Stupnikoff
Titled
TOIL AND PEACEFUL LIFE

Commemorating Doukhobor Heritage

HISTORICAL SAGA
OF THE
DOUKHOBOR FAITH 1750–1990s

DOUKHOBOR MOTTOS

Toil and Peaceful Life	The Welfare of all Nations is not worth the life of one child

The Doukhobor "BOOK OF LIFE" in the beginning was partly composed independently and partly formed out of the contents of the Bible. It consists of sacred hymns and psalms that were transmitted orally and lived in memory.

"RECORD IN YOUR HEART, PROCLAIM IN WORD"

Researched, Compiled and Published
by
Sam George Stupnikoff

Commemorating "THE BURNING OF ARMS" 1895
Saskatchewan's Independents 1902–1992

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Saskatoon
1992

HISTORICAL SAGA OF THE DOUKHOBOR FAITH
1750–1990s
TOIL AND PEACEFUL LIFE
by Sam G Stupnikoff, Blaine Lake, Saskatchewan

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The highlites of the condensed and comprehensive history of the Doukhobors are entirely my own selections. The information is factual to the best of my knowledge from oral interviews, recollections of the past, and to the accuracy of the sources identified herein.

Sam George Stupnikoff

Prelude

The Doukhobors emerged into history around the middle of the eighteenth century. Early in their philosophical development the Doukhobors began to recognize that it was wrong to use icons, ceremonies, religious symbols and embellishments of the Russian Orthodox Church. They sought religious freedom in the simple teachings of Jesus Christ, and began to worship God "in spirit and truth." They would sooner give up their personal possessions and suffer persecution than break the commandment, "Thou Shalt Not Kill."

In 1785, Archbishop Ambrosius of the Russian Orthodox Church, in an effort to identify a group of dissident Russian peasants as heretics, referred to them as "Doukoborstsi." The term means "spirit wrestlers." The priest intended it as a derogatory label meaning that these people were struggling against the Holy Spirit.

The dissident Russian peasants adopted the name Doukhobors but gave it their own interpretation saying: "We are Spirit Wrestlers because we wrestle with and for the Spirit of God."

Doukhobor history is marked by efforts that brought their beliefs into practice in every-day life. Doukhoborism can more accurately be described as a way of life, rather than a religion.

Doukhobors aspiring to pacifism developed many unique cultural customs and traditions while living as a group for

several centuries. The most moral achievement by the Doukhobors was inspired by the high ideals of their spiritual leader, Peter Vasilievitch Verigin. They made a decisive stand against militarism and all forms of violence. On June 29, 1895, they piled and burnt all the arms and weapons they possessed—a symbolic act of total renunciation of taking life.

During this symbolic act, the Doukhobors encountered harsh oppression from the Czarist State and the Russian Orthodox Church authorities. They were beaten and tortured, and the freedom and privileges of their lifestyle no longer prevailed. The survivors were exiled and marched to northern Siberia and held in detention under extremely harsh conditions.

The harsh act of oppression against the Doukhobors by the Czarist State received world-wide attention from the people of Protestant faith with pacifistic ideals. Sufferings of such proportions attracted humanitarians such as Count Leo Tolstoy, a famed Russian novelist, as well as the Society of Friends ("Quakers") in England and America. Because of the earnest appeal by Tolstoy and the Society of Friends to the Czarist State for a reprieve for the Doukhobors, the same was granted by the Czar of Russia, Nicholas II. This reprieve permitted the Doukhobors to emigrate to a land where they could live within the concept of Doukhobor ideals of non-violence and pacifism, free of oppression.

The Doukhobors emigrated to the barren Western Canadian Territory in 1899 with a glowing tribute to their slogan of "Toil and Peaceful Life."

Burning of Arms

June 29, 1895

The burning of arms had taken place near several villages such as Spasowka and Slavyanka in the Kars region. However, the largest concentration for the burning of arms had taken place in the wet mountain region in the Republic of Georgia, two miles from the village of Orlowka.

A huge pile of wood was made and on to it were laid all the arms and weapons that were in possession of the Doukhobors which was then sprayed with kerosene. A torch was set to the pile. The Doukhobors then assembled into a "V" formation around the burning pile and chanted psalms into the early dawn of June 29, 1895. The authorities of the Czar became aware of the burning, and the Cossacks came upon them two thousand strong. The Sergeant in command delivered the Governor's ultimatum to the elders. The Governor's ultimatum was that the Doukhobors appear before him in the village of Bogdanovka, some ten miles away. The elders replied, "We are praying. If the Governor wishes to speak to us, he may come to us, for he is alone and we are many." This enraged the Sergeant and he turned the Cossacks on them. The horsemen galloped upon them swinging their lead-tipped whips as the Doukhobors tightened their ranks. After three charges, the bruised and the bleeding were herded into marching formation. Chanting psalms, they were marched to the village of Bogdanovka where the Governor was waiting.

The enraged Governor was to command the Cossacks to open fire on the Doukhobors, but Count Korpinski intervened, halting the Cossacks of what seemed the certainty of extermination of the Doukhobors.

Severe persecutions followed this event, with the most severe being endured in the Penal Battalion when the Doukhobors surrendered their army documents and laid down their arms. They were flogged with thorny rods, with the thorns remaining in their flesh, and were thrown into cold dark cells. After several days, they were brought to the Chaplain who required them to adhere to the Orthodox Rites, which the Doukhobors had renounced, on the premise that no one or anything is Holy. The Doukhobors replied, "Holy is the Heavenly Father, Creator of All, and to Him we shall abide." Their position was unbearable. They were acting by their own conviction and on the advice of their Spiritual Leader, Peter Vasilievitch Verigin, who was in exile. Many perished in the persecution, but the majority was convinced and held out and were later exiled into Siberian Russia.

From that day, June 29, 1895, the Doukhobors portrayed their courage and determination to adhere to the Commandment, "Thou Shalt Not Kill," by defying government authority to serve in the Militia and refusing to administer the Oath of Allegiance to the State. The Doukhobors said that their allegiance was to their Creator, the Heavenly Father, and to Him alone.

Facing Page: Burning of Arms, June 29th, 1985—*from an oil painting by Agatha Stupnikoff. Artist's perception from oral research of the historic event, also recollectins from those that survived persecution and oppression.*

From the Book of Life of Doukhobors
Translated Version 1978

This "Defence of a Christian" was composed by the Transcaucasian Doukhobors in 1894 when they refused to fulfill military duty and other government requirements.

Psalm 374

A Christian's Defence

"I am not going to give you my oath, nor am I going to serve you, because I am a Christian. I do not wish to kill my brethren nor force them to commit violence, according to the words of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ, I consider all people living on earth as children of one Father and therefore my brothers. Our Lord and God, Jesus Christ, forbids us to take an oath. Read the Gospel of Matthew, chapter twenty-three. You will find there that the Lord forbids us to swear, and swearing is taking an oath. Even the law does not permit me to serve you, because as a Christian, I should not prepare myself willingly to slay my brothers. Read the Ten Commandments. It is written there: "though shalt not kill, nor steal, nor commit adultery" Our Lord Jesus Christ also gave us two commandments orally. The first commandment says: "Thou shalt love The Lord God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind—this is the first and great commandment." The second one says: "Thou shalt love thy brother and neighbour as thyself." On these two commandments rests all the law of God."

The Doukhobors had chosen the date of June 29, 1895, for the burning of the arms because it was a date commemorating the birth date of the Martyrs of early Christianity, the Apostles St. Peter and Paul, and the birth date of their Spiritual Leader, Peter V. Verigin, who was born on June 29, 1859.

On the date of June 29th, a religious observance is held by the people of the Doukhobor Faith in each calendar year commemorating the historic event of the "Burning of Arms." It is known as St. Peter's Day.

Facing Page *George (Greesha) Chernoff of Doukhobor Faith at the age of 86, standing beside the Cairn at the official unveiling ceremonies on June 14, 1959 He was the last surviving forefather who endured the oppression and severe physical persecution, by the Russian state-controlled Church and the Czarist Regime, for their religious beliefs while observing the Commandment, "Thou Shalt Not Kill." Deeply embedded lash scars along his back, were evidence of the severe persecutions from which many had perished, and those who survived preserved the spirit, which guided them from tyranny to freedom in their exodus to the Canadian prairie region He passed away at the age of 92 years*
Standing on the left by the Cairn is Simeon Zbitnoff, on the right is Jack Perehudoff, pioneers of the immigration era. Jack Perehudoff homesteaded River Lot 1, Twp 45 – Rge 5 – W 3rd Mer , which was the site of the French fur trading post, Fort La Montée built in 1797 Photo courtesy Saskatchewan Archives Board, Saskatoon Star Phoenix Collection S–SP–B 5103–13

Sleep on You Brave Faithful Eagles

(translated version)

This hymn was composed by the Doukhobors to commemorate those who did not survive the severe persecutions following the historic event, the "Burning of Arms."

This hymn is occasionally sung at the conclusion of Sunday prayer services and on the religious day of observance on June 29th, commemorating St. Peter's Day.

Hymn

"Sleep on you brave faithful eagles,
Sleep in the arms of the Lord,
You have received from your master
Peace and the promised reward.

Now on this hard earned pathway,
Easy for us 'tis to tread,
You paid the price they exacted,
So we could journey ahead.

Many and cruel were the tortures,
You took in Siberian plains,
In Tundrian regions you suffered
Dreadful and sad were your days.

Today as we think of your suffering,
And of the hardships you passed,
We pray to abide by your message
And join the great common task.

Sleep on you brave faithful eagles,
Sleep in the arms of the Lord,
We shall o'ercome all temptation,
And follow Christ and His word."

Immigration

Prince Khilkov, who made the official link between Tolstoy and the Doukhobors, served as an officer with the regiment of Russian Guards. In 1877–78, he was stationed in an area near the Doukhobor villages. He was impressed by the Doukhobor way of life and was convinced by their arguments against the forms of Russian Orthodox religion.

His aristocratic existence was indiscreet by their teachings. He resigned from the army and settled to live amongst the Doukhobors. Khilkov, for his adversary action, was arrested and exiled to the Caucasus. Khilkov occasionally visited some four hundred Doukhobor families that lived in exile in the Caucasus. His presence in the Caucasus was deemed undesirable by the Russian authorities for his continued association with the Doukhobors.

Khilkov was permitted to leave Russia along with two exiled Doukhobor families, Ivan Evin and Peter Makhortov. The two families were representatives of the Caucasian Doukhobors in search of land for relocation and permanent settlement. England or America were the preference of the Doukhobors.

The attempt by the Doukhobors in 1897 to settle on the island of Cyprus, which was British territory, was a disappointment as the climate was extremely hot and the soil too sandy.

The party departed as dissidents. The Russian authorities warned them that they would not be permitted to return. They arrived in England on July 2, 1898, where Chertkov's Tolstoyan committee convinced them that Canada would be the most desirable place for the Doukhobors to settle.

Chertkov was a pacifist and an advocate of Leo Tolstoy. His appeal for amnesty for the Doukhobors from the Czar created annoyance. As an adversary of the Russian State, he was arrested, however, Chertkov's influence in the Court allowed him to leave the country in 1890. As an anti-Czarist expatriate, Chertkov travelled to England where he set up a Tolstoyan colony at Purleigh, in Essex.

Arrangements for the Doukhobors' migration to Canada began in the third month of 1898. News was received in London, England, that the Doukhobors were granted permission to leave Russia.

The welcomed news resulted in great activity amongst the friends of the Doukhobors. The Society of Friends (Quakers) set up a special committee to work in cooperation with the Tolstoyan Committee in England to assist the Doukhobors in the selection of a suitable place for settlement. In correspondence with the Doukhobors, they favored Western Canada for settlement. The Canadian government was publicizing the uninhabited Western Frontier in Great Britain.

The Tolstoyans were aware of the favorable conditions the Old Colony Mennonites had obtained for settlement on the prairies. They had received their land in a large block, instead of quarter sections as compared to the individual settlers under the Dominion Lands Act. This enabled them to maintain their own form of communal organization and lifestyle by settling in villages instead of each being required to reside on his own homestead.

Tolstoy was a friend of James Mavor, a professor of political economy at the University of Toronto and an expert on the prairies and immigration.

In his letter of March 31, 1898, Tolstoy informed James Mavor that the Doukhobors were prepared to immigrate to Canada. Tolstoy stressed three points which the Doukhobors would expect assurance: No obligation to military service; no interference into the internal organization of the Sect; and block land grants where the Doukhobors could live communally, because they could not live on isolated farms. Tolstoy assured Mavor that the Doukhobors were excellent farmers and that the Doukhobors would send their children to school, provided that the children would not receive religious training at the schools.

Tolstoy's letter, and a letter from Chertkov's Tolstoyans, stimulated an existing interest on Mavor's part. Mavor suggested independently to the Minister of the Interior, Clifford Sifton, that the Doukhobors would fit admirably into his plans for accelerated settlement of the prairie regions. The experiment of settling the prairie regions with groups of people, including the Old Colony Mennonites in 1874, proved beneficial to the Canadian government, as individual settlers shunned the open prairies for reasons of survival.

An appeal was made to Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, by the Society of Friends to grant refuge for the Doukhobors in their new country where they could have their religious freedom and permanent settlement. Her Majesty responded to this appeal and granted refuge, permitting the Doukhobors to migrate to Canada with full religious privileges including exemption from military service.

With Tolstoy's letter and a letter from the Tolstoyan Committee in hand, Mavor intensified his negotiations with Sifton and the Minister for Immigration, William McReary, advising them specifically the expectations of the Doukhobors, namely, exemption from military service, assurance that they could hold their land in large blocks, and the form of education that would be provided to their children.

In response to Mavor's efforts, the Ministers responded favorably, advising Mavor that the Canadian Government was anxious to populate the unopened regions of the North West and assuring Mavor that the Doukhobors would be permitted to settle in the unopened region The concessions enacted for the Old Colony Mennonites by the Canadian government in the late 1870s would be re-enacted for the Doukhobors, as their expectations were broadly similar

Before Tolstoy and the Tolstoyans received replies to their letters from Mavor, a Doukhobor delegation of Ivan Evin and Peter Makhortov, their wives and children, accompanied by Alymer Maude and Khilkov, sailed from Liverpool, England, to Canada on the *S S Vancouver* on September 1, 1898 Alymer Maude, who was a carpet merchant in Russia for many years and a friend and translator for Leo Tolstoy, had returned to England in 1897 Maude was to act as the official representative of the Doukhobors The two families were to be examples of the well-behaved Doukhobors for the Canadians to observe

Upon arrival at the Quebec harbour on September 10, 1898, the delegation proceeded to Ottawa to meet with Sifton and Canadian authorities In their discussions, it was made quite clear that the Doukhobors would be required to conform with statistical provisions by registering marriages, births, etc As well, they would be given the advantages of the Militia Act, namely, exemption from military service, and the Hamlet Clause, permitting them to reside in villages

Ottawa, Ontario
September 22, 1898

Mr Sifton to Professor Mavor

Dear Sir

I have your letter of the 26th Ultimo and I have read with interest what you say in regard to the Doukhobors I had a conference with Mr Maude on my way from Winnipeg and went into details with him to some extent I hope to be able to do something to assist in the removal of these people to the North West Territories where I am satisfied they would become useful citizens I have

to thank you for your kindness in forwarding information at your disposal, and beg to remain

Yours faithfully
(Sgd) Clifford Sifton

While Maude continued negotiations in Ottawa, Khilkov and the Doukhobor delegation set out for the prairies in search of the best area for settlement. William McReary, Minister of Immigration in Winnipeg, provided them with information and arranged for guides. Unable to find a single block of suitable land large enough to settle as one colony, they accepted land in three blocks. Two of the blocks were in the Assiniboia Territory. The North Colony consisted of six townships, seventy miles north of Yorkton. The South Colony consisted of fifteen townships, thirty miles north of Yorkton. The third colony was in the Saskatchewan Territory near Prince Albert, consisting of twenty townships, and was known as the Prince Albert Doukhobor Reserve.

In the Prince Albert reserve, the even-numbered sections were to be homesteaded by Doukhobors, while the odd-numbered sections were to be selected by the railways.

The Doukhobors were willing to endure the hardships of a new beginning. The open and untamed Canadian prairies were the new horizons where the Doukhobors hoped to live within their beliefs, free of oppression.

PRIVY COUNCIL CANADA

(Extract from a Report of the Committee of the Honourable Privy Council, approved by His Excellency on December 6, 1898)

On a Report dated 30th November 1898, from the Minister of the Interior stating that arrangements have been completed with Mr. Alymer Maude, of London, England, the representative of the sect of Russians known as Doukhobors, who now inhabit the slopes of the Caucasus in Russia, for the immediate emigration to Canada of several thousands of these people. That from a despatch dated 27th May, 1898, addressed to the Foreign Office by Her Majesty's Consul at Batoum, it would appear that since their settlement in the region of the Caucasus, the Doukhobors have by their good behavior, diligence, sobriety and hard working qualities, brought nothing but prosperity to the barren localities in which they were originally settled but as from religious doctrines they are averse to bearing arms, an exemption which the Russian Government has refused to countenance, they have been permitted by the latter to depart from Russia

The Minister, under the circumstances, and considering that the Doukhobors would appear to be a most desirable class of settlers to locate upon the vacant Dominion Lands in Manitoba and the North West Territories, is of the opinion that it is expedient to give them the fullest assurances of absolute immunity from military service in the event of their settling in this country

The Minister submits that subsection 3 of Section 21 of the Militia Act, Chapter 41 of the Revised Statutes of Canada, contains the following provision:

> "Every person bearing a certificate from the Society of Quakers, Mennonites or Tunkers, and every inhabitant of Canada of any religious denomination, otherwise subject to military duty, who, from the doctrines of his religion, is averse to bearing arms and refuses personal military service, shall be exempt from such service when balloted in time of peace or war upon such conditions and under such regulations as the Governor in Council, from time to time, prescribes"

The Minister recommends that under the power vested in Your Excellency in Council by the above provisions, the Doukhobors, settling permanently in Canada, be exempted unconditionally, from service in the Militia, upon the production in each case of a certificate of membership from the proper authorities of their community

The Committee submit the same for your Excellency's approval

John J Myers,
Clerk of the Privy Council

(Signed)
The Honorable
The Minister of the Interior

The substantial accord that was reached with Canadian authorities was confirmed by the Deputy Minister of the Interior, James Smart, in a letter to Alymer Maude On October 5, 1898, Maude and Khilkov cabled Chertkov and the Tolstoyans in Purleigh that arrangements could begin for bringing the Doukhobors to Canada

Tolstoy's son, Sergei, who was consulting with the Tolstoyan committee in England, immediately travelled to Batum, a port on the Black Sea, in the Republic of Georgia, to assist the British Consul in Batum in the transfer arrangements.

Two ocean freighters, the *Lake Huron* and her sister ship, the *Lake Superior,* were commissioned for the transfer of approximately 7,400 Doukhobors in four contingents to Canada.

The two ocean-going vessels were converted to accommodate the transfer with the help of a number of Doukhobor men who were experienced sailors. The first contingent was under the care of Sergei Tolstoy.

Funds for the transfer of Doukhobors were contributions from the Tolstoyans, Quakers, and from the scanty Doukhobor property. The largest amount was provided by Leo Tolstoy. He collected it mainly from wealthy Russians. His own contribution was derived from his latest novel "Resurrection," for which he gained world-wide attention and was awarded the world renowned Nobel Prize. Tolstoy was excommunicated from the Russian Orthodox Church for his philosophical convictions of pacifism and his association and support of the Doukhobors.

On December 21, 1898, the *Lake Huron* steamed out from the Port of Batum with the first party of 2,134 Doukhobors from the Wet Mountain Region of Georgia enroute to the Canadian port of Halifax. The *Lake Huron* sailed across the Black Sea, then entered and sailed across the Mediterranean Sea, which was deceptively smooth.

Life aboard ship was well organized. While the women washed clothes and prepared food, the men went about tasks apportioned to them. Since the ship was short-handed and in order to save expenses, some of the men who had formerly been sailors were assisting as a supplementary crew.

In the mid-Atlantic Ocean, the ship encountered a severe eight-day storm. Many of the Doukhobors were incapacitated by seasickness and were terrified by this strange new illness. Many feared they would never reach land. Ten from their party who hoped to find a new and happier life in Canada had been put to rest in the sea. The gale-force wind subsided three days before they reached land. The Doukhobor men cleaned down the ship with such zest that Canadian authorities remarked, they had never seen so well a kept ship come into the Halifax harbour.

In the afternoon of January 23, 1899, after a voyage of 33 days, the *Lake Huron* anchored at the port of Halifax. At that moment, the Doukhobors burst forth with hymns of praise and thanksgiving. It was an impressive sight. The men, clean and stalwart, were clad in sheep-skin coats and caps while the women wore skirts of bright red or blue, heavy black jackets and white head shawls. The men and women presented a picturesque appearance.

James Smart, the Deputy Minister of the Interior, reporters from the Maritime newspapers, Quakers from the United States, Khilkov and the two original Doukhobor delegates came on board to officially welcome the Doukhobors to their new homeland. This was the largest single group in the history of migration to Canada. They were impressed with their first view of these East European immigrants, the well behaved children and the well kept ship.

James Smart, after officially greeting the Doukhobors, wrote in his report, "I was greatly struck with their politeness and general good behavior, even with the children. I could not but feel that they were people who in this respect might set a good example to other residents of Canada."

From Halifax, the *Lake Huron* sailed on to St. John, where the onlookers cheered as the Doukhobors first stepped on Canadian soil. They fell on their knees with their brows to the soil. Their spokesman explained to the onlookers that he

and his brethren were bowing to the "Spirit of God" that brought them and made them welcome in their new homeland.

When the Doukhobors stepped on the land, the large crowd of curious onlookers cheered. The club women from Montreal welcomed them and presented the children with gifts of candy.

Five trains of colonist cars were waiting to carry the Doukhobors on their long journey to the prairies. The proprietors of the railway companies were eager to recruit the Doukhobors for settlement on the vacant prairies. In their negotiations with Maude, they agreed to transport the Doukhobors from their port of entry to the nearest point of their settlements at the cost of six dollars per head.

The first three contingents of Doukhobors, numbering approximately six thousand, were transported to the west. They were housed for several months in immigration halls located at Selkirk, Dauphin and Brandon, in Manitoba, as well as in Yorkton, in the Assiniboine Territory. Their final destination was the two reserved blocks of land in the Assiniboia Territory.

The latter of the two contingents were Doukhobors from the Yelizavetpol region. The last of the four contingents, numbering one thousand four hundred, were from the Kars region. They arrived in Canada on June 5, 1899. This contingent was transported to Winnipeg where they were housed in immigration halls. Their destination was three hundred miles west in the Saskatchewan Territory near Prince Albert, not far from the region of Louis Riel's Rebellion. While spending several months in immigration halls pending final arrangements for inhabiting their reserved land, the Doukhobor men acquired work when it was available to assist them financially in surviving the first harsh winter on the prairies.

The fourth group of approximately one thousand four hundred, after their stopover in Winnipeg, proceeded West by train to settle in the Prince Albert Reserve. They arrived

at the Duck Lake station in the month of November with their meager belongings they had brought from Russia. The group spent a long harsh Saskatchewan winter in makeshift homes and tents, with assistance from the Society of Friends "Quakers," in the United States. The Quakers sent vital supplies of food and clothing for their survival through the first winter on their new frontier.

Although 7,400 Doukhobors immigrated to Canada, approximately 12,000 Doukhobors chose to remain in Czarist Russia.

THE MONTREAL DAILY STAR—SATURDAY, JANUARY 21, 1899

ARRIVAL OF DOUKHOBORS

THE MEN AND WOMEN PRESENTED A PICTURESQUE APPEARANCE

On Friday last the steamer *Lake Huron* arrived at Halifax, with the first installment of the Doukhobors, 2296 in number—1804 adults, 492 children—after a voyage of twenty nine days from the south of Russia. The decks of the vessel presented a picturesque appearance. Men and women of all ages, the men garbed in sheepskin coats, fur leggings, top boots and fur caps, and the women dressed in red plaidlike skirts, woollen comforters and sheepskin coats looked with curious eyes on the tug boat sent down to meet them.

The *Lake Huron* left Halifax about 8 o'clock Sunday for St. John, arriving on Monday afternoon at 4 o'clock. They brought with them about 250 tons of baggage. The ship docked at Sand Point, the wharves in the vicinity being alive with people anxious to get a look at the immigrants.

There were seven marriages and one birth on the voyage. The marriages were in the form customary with the Doukhobors, no ceremony being performed. The men selected the women of their choice, and those chosen being willing, that constituted the marriage ceremony. In this manner five couples were made happy early on the voyage of *Lake Huron*.

There were eleven sick people on the vessel, who were in such a condition that the authorities did not feel like forwarding them, arrangements were made for their admission to the public hospital. The government will pay all expenses. One of the sick people, a women, is suffering from peritonitis. A man is ill with pneumonia. The other ones are not serious. An interpreter has been left with them.

The scene is the C.P.R. warehouse Monday night and early yesterday morning where moral will never be forgotten by those who saw them. At different parts of the warehouse might be seen what looked like a pile of sheep or goat skins, but underneath those skins were different families of Doukhobors who were having a sleep until such time as they would be called to embark on their train.

The arrangements for feeding the party from their departure here

until they arrive at their destination required considerable forethought and care In each train were 100 pounds of cheese, 12 pounds of tea, 1 barrel of sugar, 50 bars of soap, 16 gallons of milk, 500 loaves of bread and 10 pounds of salt At Ottawa three days provisions will be taken for the journey west Each train is supplied with the following utensils Two water casks, two half barrels, 14 dozen teaspoons 5 dozen cups, 14 dozen plates, 5 mixing pans two cheese knives five coffee boilers, two tin pails, one box of matches two sacks, two brooms, one table one pound nails, a hatchet, sugar scoop one bundle wrapping paper, four large blankets, and 25 yards towelling

The first train carrying 410 people left Sand Point for Winnipeg at 8 25 Monday night The second train with 212 for Winnipeg and 296 for Yorkton, got away at 12 00 a m Tuesday morning The third train had 125 for Winnipeg and 279 for Portage La Prairie, the fourth with 417 for Brandon and the fifth with 430 for Dauphin Only the personal baggage was allowed on these trains, the heavy baggage being sent on a special train

The C P R officials here have been notified that the steamer *Lake Superior* which sailed eight days after the *Lake Huron* has on board 1,990 souls

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Public Archives Canada

DOUKHOBORS ARRIVAL

TOLSTOY'S PETS ARRIVE IN THE HALIFAX HARBOUR

JANUARY 21ST 1899

GREETED BY AMERICAN QUAKERS

Representatives of the Society of Friends Show
Strong Emotions on Hailing the Exiles—Affecting Scenes

HALIFAX, JAN 20 – The steamer *Lake Huron* with 2 300 Doukhobors from Batum on board is entering the harbour

The arrival of the *Lake Huron* to-day at Halifax makes her voyage almost a month long from Batum, which port she left on December 22 After passing Quarantine here she will immediately be taken to St John where six trains of ten cars each, are waiting to convey the Doukhobors in a four day s trip over land

Deputy Minister of the Interior Smart received word that the *Lake Superior*, which is bringing out the second lot of Doukhobors had on board 1,989 souls, but had not been reported from Gibralter She may however passed about January 16 It is hardly possible that the *Lake Superior* may reach here only a few days behind the *Lake Huron*, and if she should the landing of over 4 000 people in such a short time will not tax the energies of the department or the railways for both are fully prepared

reprinted from an original newspaper clipping
Public Archives Canada

WITHIN THE VEIL

HALIFAX JAN 20 – The steamer *Lake Huron* with 2,000 of the 5,000 Russian Quakers known as the Doukhobors or "Tolstoy's Pets," who are immigrating to the Canadian North West, arrived in Quarantine this evening The passengers will remain on board to-night To-morrow they march ashore to the Lawlor's Island Quarantine station, to undergo inspection In the afternoon the steamer will re-embark her human freight and proceed to St John where they will land and take the railroad to their future home There were ten deaths (infants) on the passage from Batum, Russia There is one case of measles on board isolated Otherwise the ship's passengers have now been throughout remarkably free from contagion of every kind

The Doukhobors were greeted by a party of their representatives in America, notably the Russian Prince Khilkoff and Messrs. Elkington of Philadelphia and Gildey of Dartmonth Mass

Prince Khilkoff said the French government offered free transportation for the Doukhobors to settle in a French colony The offer, however was declined as these people prefer to settle in Anglo-Saxon dominions where they will not be subject to conscription

When the ship came to anchorage in the spacious waters of Halifax harbour the Doukhobors gazed with interest on their surroundings They were mainly undemonstrative and had a stolid appearance They seemed comfortable and showed some pleasure of their safe arrival They wore skin garments and caps Mr Elkington, of Philadelphia and other Quakers who received them, wore the broad brimmed hats peculiar to their sect They wept with emotion, as their boat approached the side of the big steamer, and they called to the people leaning over the rail, "Welcome Doukhobors!" At the head of the gangway the scene was affecting The immigrants recognized Prince Khilkoff and crowded around him, all eager to hear him speak and to kiss him A striking feature was the psalm chant in solemn service The chanting began by the passengers themselves as the ship slowly came to anchor

The singing was strong and remarkably pleasant It was interrupted by the Prince's advent on board They gave him a place in the services, which were conducted by Mr Elkington, who with streaming eyes and face raised to the blue sky and with outstretched arms, seemed deeply moved This service consisted of prayer and supplicaton

Everybody was uncovered, notwithstanding the chilly atmosphere The singing of the hymn was then resumed The burden of the chant, as translated from the Russian by Prince Khilkoff was "God is with us, He has brought us through " Only a short stay on the deck of the steamer was permitted Certain quarantine officials will remain on duty to-night Very few Doukhobors speak English and a large portion cannot read or write, owing to the lack of early advantages

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reprinted from an original newspaper clipping
Public Archives Canada

Pioneer Settlement

As the snow melted on the prairies in the spring of the year 1900, through the yellow beaten grass the wild prairie crocus emerged. The Doukhobors began to move out of the immigration halls and temporary shelters to the open prairie frontier to land that was reserved for their habitation. They knew that it was necessary to get accustomed gradually to the living conditions in a new country and that the first years of pioneer life would challenge the muscle and mind of the new settlers. They experienced difficulty in communication, as Russian was the only language they spoke.

The Doukhobors established temporary encampments from which the settlers would spread out to their individual villages. The selection for the building of the village sites was made by the Doukhobors from various areas of the reserved land. The locations were near heavily wooded areas with an abundant supply of fresh water for the villagers.

The heavy timbers were to be cut and hewed for the building of village homes. Each village would consist of approximately fifteen homes, each house large enough to accommodate from four to six families. The population of each village was to be approximately 120 people.

The houses were built of hewn logs with sod-thatched roofs. The walls were smoothly plastered with a mixture of clay mud and dry prairie grass or straw. The structure of each dwelling

was one large room In the centre of the floor was a large plain stove to supply the heat.

The beginning of toil and peaceful life for the new settlers, free of oppression and government interference in their new land, began with a majority of young able-bodied men, trekking back to Winnipeg They were employed in railway gangs during the summer months to earn the much needed income for the purchase of livestock and equipment. The remaining began the construction of village sites with the help of the elderly men, women and children

Self-sufficiency helped the Doukhobors survive during the first years on their new frontier. Prairie sod was cultivated with hand-guided plows built by the villagers and drawn by oxen Furniture was made out of hand-hewn wood Utensils, such as spoons, were carved out of wood The spinning of linen thread was woven on handmade looms and made into homespun cloth Wool was spun for handknitted garments such as sweaters, stockings, mittens, gloves, etc Grist mills for the grinding of grain into flour were built near several village sites

The Doukhobors, being totally vegetarians, relied on their gardening skills for the production of the necessary essentials of food for their livelihood The Doukhobors made as much progress as could be expected by the time winter of 1900–1901 came upon them. A majority of villages were established and homes were built, some of the land was broken, and the crops they planted were harvested This provided them with income

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Facing Page *Volunteer Doukhobor women pulling a hand guided plow of their own accord in the spring of 1900, breaking enough virgin sod for the planting of gardens All able bodied men were occupied in the construction of village dwellings, while others trekked to Winnipeg to acquire work with the construction gangs on the railroad This was the communitarian lifestyle of the Doukhobors*

Action of this nature by Doukhobor women occurred only in one instance, in their new settlements on the Western prairies

Photograph courtesy Saskatchewan Archives Board

from the harvested grain, together with the income that was earned from railway employment, to purchase a few livestock and a few more implements.

Petrovka was one of the first villages built in the Prince Albert Doukhobor Reserve, on the west bank of the North Saskatchewan River, being Section 30, Township 43, Range 6, West of the 3rd Meridian. (It is one of the focal points in the history of our province.)

The government of the North West Territories in 1901 established a ferry near the site of the Petrovka village to facilitate Doukhobor communities for access to markets in Rosthern some 30 miles away. It was first named the Doukhobor Ferry and later renamed to Petrofka, commemorating the village. With an increased volume of traffic, the Petrofka Ferry site was selected for the construction of a bridge to span the North Saskatchewan River in 1959, by the Department of Highways and Transportation. The "Petrofka Bridge" was officially opened to traffic on September 26, 1962, ending the era of the "Petrofka Ferry" crossing.

The village of Rosthern was located along the Qu'Appelle Long Lake Saskatchewan Railroad in the Rosthern Mennonite Reserve. The reserve contained 24 townships of land which the Old Colony Mennonites settled on in 1897. The Mennonite Reserve was bordered from the east bank of the North Saskatchewan River while the Prince Albert Doukhobor Reserve was bordered by the west bank of the North Saskatchewan River. These two groups, with broadly similar beliefs and lifestyles, maintained no association, while living adjacently in the Milky Waters Region in the Republic of Georgia, and later on the Canadian prairies.

The Old Colony Mennonites, while living in the Republic of Georgia adjacent to the Doukhobor settlements, had

Facing Page *Petrofka Bridge, open to traffic September 26, 1962, a focal point in the history of the Province of Saskatchewan.*
Photo Author

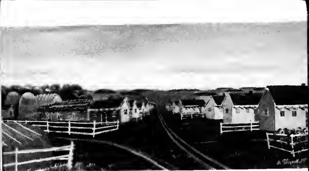
incurred in consequence the displeasure of the Russian Government and had been obliged by an official notification of the Governor of Tbilisi to confirm to the conscription law or to leave the country. The Mennonites chose to leave Russia and immigrated to Canada, establishing their communal settlements in two separate areas in the province of Manitoba in 1874. Being religious pacifists, the Canadian Government enacted special concessions for the Mennonites: the "Militia Act," being exemption from the militia, and the "Hamlet Clause," which was not a special concession to the Mennonites but accorded them with modifications of The Dominion Land Act before their immigration to Canada. In the late 1870's the act had been amended by the addition of the Hamlet Clause to facilitate the settlements of Mennonites.

The "Hamlet Clause" was re-interpreted for the Doukhobors prior to their emigration to Canada in 1899.

The clause read as follows:

> "If a number of homestead settlers, embracing at least twenty families with a view to greater convenience in the establishment of schools and churches, and to the obtainment of social advantages of like character, as to be allowed to settle together in a hamlet or village, the Minister may, in his discretion, vary or dispense with the foregoing requirements as to residence, but not as to cultivation of each separate quarter-section entered as a homestead."

During the period of 1900-1901, some 66 villages were built by the Doukhobors. They were scattered broadly over their reserved land. Approximately 2,757 individual entries were made by the Doukhobors for homestead lands in accordance with the Hamlet Clause. The Hamlet Clause allowed them to reside in their villages while making entry on homestead lands within a radius of 11 miles surrounding the village site. Although each homestead entry was made individually, the land was farmed communally by the Doukhobors.


A Stupnikoff

Doukhobor Village, 1901. *From an oil painting by Agatha Stupnikoff.*

Doukhobor Villages

South Colony, Assiniboia Territory, 35 Villages

Kyrillovo
Old Gorilloe
New Gorilloe
Moisayovo
Novo Troitzkoe
Ootishenie
Motvayovo
Kalmakovo
Blagosklonoe
Bisednoe
Novoe
Blagovishennie
Kapustina
Najersda
Smyrennie
Parkoratonoe
Otradnoe
Savelnoe
Spaskoe
New Pakrofka
Riduonovo
Terpennie
Vernoe
Blagodarnoe
Lubovnoe
Efromovo
Voskrisennie
Oobezhoennie
Troodoloobevoe
Tomboscoe
Petrovo
Vosnisennie
Prokoratonoe
Vaziennie
Slavnoe

North Colony, Assiniboia Territory, 19 Villages

Troitzkoe
Oospennie
Archangelskoe
Perihodnoe
Pavlovo
Boghumdanoe
Gromovoe
Verra
Michaelovo
Vosnisennie
Hlebodarnoe
Pokrovskoe
Simeonovo
Osvoborsdennie
Lubomeernoe
Libedevo
Teehemeernoe
New Kaminka
Kaminka

Prince Albert Colony, Sask. Territory, 12 Villages

Karilowa
Bodanofka
Pakrofka
Petrovka
Oospennie
Slavyanka
Spasofka
Pasariofka
Large Horelofka
Small Horelofka
Troitzkaa
Terpennie

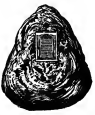
Doukhobor Village Names
were from their former
villages in Russia, where
a certain group lived

AN HISTORIC SITE

PETROFKA FERRY

Unveiling

SUNDAY, JUNE 14, 1959
at 3:00 p.m., M.D.T.



TO COMMEMORATE MARKING THE
SITE OF THE DOUKHOBOR FERRY.
ESTABLISHED IN 1901, AND LATER
RE-NAMED THE PETROFKA FERRY.

PETROFKA FERRY

This site was chosen not on the basis of the natural beauty of its location on the west bank of the North Saskatchewan river but because it was one of the focal points in the history of this Province. The rivers which had been the watering places for millions of buffalo, and the highways for the Indians and fur-traders, finally became barriers to the carts and wagons of the agricultural settlers, and to the railroads, which began to advance across the prairies in the late nineteenth century. A railroad from Regina to Prince Albert, completed in 1890, brought settlers of mixed origin into the Rosthern area just east of this site.

In 1899 a group of settlers arrived from Russia whose story is unique even in the history of the colorful settlement of Saskatchewan. These were religious refugees, known as Doukhobors, a pietistic, pacifist sect, who had maintained themselves in Russia for three hundred years against the powerful pressure of a state church and an absolute Czarist regime. When the pressure was increased in the late nineteenth century they were assisted to emigrate with the material help of the eminent Russian novelist, Count Leo Tolstoy, the active assistance of the Quaker Society of Great Britain and the United States, and the co-operation of the Canadian Government. Among the seventy-five hundred who came to Canada some fifteen hundred were brought to this area and settled in the villages north and west of this site. This settlement was begun in August, 1899.

The Doukhobors suffered the hardships and difficulties common to all our pioneers. Their rugged beginnings were lightened by three factors, an outstanding capacity for hard work and shrewd planning, forms of mutual aid and co-operative arrangements, and the sympathetic help of outside friends. Among the friends were the Quakers already mentioned. This Society built a school house and supported its first teachers, among whom was a very remarkable woman, Miss Ella Martin from Hamilton, Ontario, and Herman J. Fast. The latter taught Russian. The remains of the stone foundations of the school house can still be seen on top of the hill west of the site.

In 1901 the government of the North West Territories established a ferry to facilitate east-west communications. It was early known as the Doukhobor Ferry but later was called Petrofka after the former village in the immediate vicinity. The name means Peter's and was a common Russian designation in honour of the saint.

The Ferry proved a great convenience not only to the Doukhobors, but also to other settlers who began pouring into this area after the turn of the century. Many of the pioneer memories of all the people of this region are connected with this important river crossing. Petrofka Ferry is therefore one of the many focal points throughout our vast Province which is of special historical interest and significance.

Dr. G. W. Simpson.

PROGRAMME

CHAIRMAN: T. L. HILL, *Deputy Minister, Dept. Travel and Information.*

OPENING PRAYER (Our Father . . .)

INTRODUCTIONS

DOUKHOBOR SONG

ADDRESS BY HON. R. A. WALKER, Q.C.,
Attorney General

DOUKHOBOR CHILDREN'S CHOIR

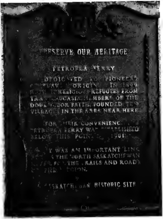
ADDRESS AND UNVEILING BY
P. G. MAKAROFF, Q.C.

ACCEPTANCE AND THANKS BY
JOHN ANDROSOFF, *President,*
Blaine Lake Doukhobor Society

DOUKHOBOR STUDENTS' CHOIR

GREETINGS FROM CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF SLAVISTS BY DR. J. B. RUDNYCKYJ, *President*

TRADITIONAL COMMUNITY SONG
("We have concluded our Meeting")



PRESERVE OUR HERITAGE

PETROFKA FERRY

DEDICATED TO PIONEERS
OF SLAVIC ORIGIN. IN 1899
[illegible] RELIGIOUS REFUGEES FROM
TRANSCAUCASIA, MEMBERS OF THE
DOUKHOBOR FAITH, FOUNDED TEN
VILLAGES IN THE AREA NEAR HERE.

FOR THEIR CONVENIENCE [illegible]
PETROFKA FERRY WAS ESTABLISHED
BELOW THIS POINT [illegible] 1901.

IT WAS AN IMPORTANT LINK
[illegible] THE NORTH SASKATCHEWAN
[illegible] THE TRAILS AND ROADS
[illegible] THE REGION.

A SASKATCHEWAN HISTORIC SITE

Above *Bronze plaque mounted on the cairn near the site of the first Doukhobor Village, and the Petrofka Bridge.* Photo Author

Facing Page *Cairn overlooking the North Saskatchewan River, west bank near the site of the first Doukhobor Village and the Petrofka Ferry. Cairn dedicated by the province of Saskatchewan*
Photo Author

Land Crisis

On the prairies were the new horizons where the Doukhobors had hoped to live a lifestyle within their beliefs. Their arrival was at a crucial time in the history of the Canadian prairies. The Canadian government was in the process of solidification. Untamed prairie wilderness where every community was law within itself had died with Louis Riel and the fallen Metis in the rebellion of 1885, "Battle of Batoche."

The Doukhobors played a considerable part in opening the west, not only by breaking and cultivating large areas of land, but also by building many miles of vital railway links often under conditions that other workers were unwilling to accept. Though many Canadians were hostile from the beginning, those who actually visited the Community were more inclined to be impressed than otherwise because of the ability of the Doukhobors to achieve so much in so little time, and particularly from the use of modern machinery and the accumulation of livestock to enhance their agricultural operation. With Verigin's intellectual business approach and his powers of inspiring his followers, he drew many admirers wherever he appeared.

The year 1902 marked the turn of events in the Doukhobor communities with the government clearly wishing to break up the village pattern. As the first approach, the government specified that if any man who lives in a village and cultivates his land more than three miles from the village in which he

lives, his homestead entry will be protected for six months to enable him to build and live on the land. If he does not build and live on the land within that time, his entry will be cancelled. This was the beginning of erosion of Verigin's vision of a communitarian enterprise on the prairies when a number of Doukhobor families preferring economic independency to the communitarian lifestyle left the villages and made entry on homestead lands. Conforming to The Homestead Act, they commenced living independently. They were therefore called the "Independent Doukhobors."

The Doukhobor homestead crisis between the government and the Doukhobors began in 1904. The Community Doukhobors ignored government authorities by failing to supply vital statistics, failing to conform with the Homestead Act, and also refusing to sign the Oath of Allegiance. They felt that the Oath of Allegiance would lead to conscription. The administering of oath was contrary to their beliefs. The demands of the Canadian government were not clearly understood by the majority of Doukhobors. The extent of limitations of conditions under which they came to Canada and their suspicions of government's action of law enforcement were a reminder of the oppression and persecution of the past.

The lack of detailed written agreements between the principal parties involved in the arrangement was eventually the product of great misunderstanding, since it enabled the Doukhobors to claim rights they did not legally possess, and Sifton's successor, the newly appointed Minister of the Interior, John Oliver, to act in ways not in the spirit of understanding reached in 1898.

The two territories of Assiniboia and Saskatchewan were absorbed into a new province in 1905 which became the province of Saskatchewan.

The influx of people of various origins into the prairie region began the settlement of the vacant lands surrounding the Doukhobor reserves. Land hungry men from eastern Canada,

Manitoba and some from the United States, began to squat on unoccupied Doukhobor lands in expectation that they would soon be open to the public.

Resentment and prejudice towards the community lifestyle of the Doukhobors became evident by individual settlers outside the Doukhobor reserve boundaries. Their grievance attracted the attention of the new Minister of the Interior, Oliver, who replaced Sifton in 1906. The Conservative opposition to the Liberal government of Sir Wilfred Laurier at the time was highly critical of the concessions enacted for the Mennonites and the Doukhobors in respect to the addition of the Hamlet Clause to the Dominion Land Act regulations. The newly appointed Minister re-interpreted the Hamlet Clause and appointed a special commission headed by Reverend John McDougal, a Methodist minister. He was to enforce the homestead land regulations, and to investigate all land claims with full power to cancel entries at his discretion of those who did not conform.

Reverend McDougal, the Christian minister, upon visiting the Doukhobor villages went about his task of informing the Doukhobors. His presence was to enforce the homestead land regulations as re-interpreted by Sifton's successor, Oliver, relating to the Hamlet Clause. Thus all entries on homestead land in excess of a three-mile radius from the villages must be occupied by those families who made entry on the said land. They must conform to the Homestead Act by signing the Oath of Allegiance and failure to do so would result in the disposition of their lands.

The remaining land within a three-mile radius would remain for the Community Doukhobors and an allocation of 15 acres per family would be granted; however, this land would be held by the government for the protection of the Community Doukhobors only during the pleasure of the government.

The Doukhobors submitted petitions against the government's actions to the Prime Minister and the Minister

of the Interior. Professor James Mavor came to their defence with knowledge of conditions under which the Doukhobors were brought to Canada, that this action was a breach of faith. Negotiations between Reverend McDougal and Peter V. Verigin resulted in failure, with the Doukhobors refusing to accept McDougal's interpretation. Because of their religious faith as pacifists, they offered no further resistance. This began the dissolution of the Doukhobor reserves.

By the year 1907, all entries made on land by Community Doukhobors were cancelled by the government for failure to comply with the homestead land regulations. The cultivation and improvements on all cancelled Doukhobor homestead lands were disregarded and no compensation was awarded to the Doukhobors by the government as a result of the cancellation.

On June 1, 1907, some 258,880 acres were made available for entry to the general public at the Yorkton and Prince Albert Land Branch Offices. This resulted in a land rush such as had never before been seen on the Canadian prairies. The magnitude of the crowds of applicants for lands thrown open were approximately 236 homesteads at Prince Albert and 1364 at Yorkton. Consequently, the duties of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police included responsibility for the handling of the crowds and maintaining order. Their duties as prescribed were very trying.

In the years 1908 to 1910, some 3,000 Doukhobors adhered to the independence of individual farming by making

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Facing Page. *Land rush at the Prince Albert land branch office, for the improved abandoned Doukhobor lands, in the Prince Albert Doukhobor Reserve, abandoned by the community Doukhobors due to re-interpretation of the Dominion Land Branch Act in 1907, with the cancellation of the Hamlet Clause.*

This began the dissolution of the Doukhobor villages and the reserve boundaries were open for homesteading to settlers of various origin. The community Doukhobors received no compensation for the homestead lands they improved.

Photo Courtesy Saskatchewan Archives Board

application for homestead lands that were a part of their community prior to the dissolution of the reserves. Conforming with Dominion Land regulations, they remained to farm as Independent Doukhobors of Saskatchewan.

The majority of Doukhobors who desired to continue a communal way of life left the province and moved to the Kootenay Valley in British Columbia, with their spiritual leader, Peter V. Verigin, where they acquired land for a new beginning. The stress of this transitionary period had resulted in a variety of changes. In the case of a small number of people known as "Sons of Freedom," their bizarre and tragic behaviour in protest to government law enforcement was completely incompatible with Doukhobor ideals of non-violence and pacifism. Their unethical behaviour received no recognition or support from the Independent or the Orthodox Doukhobors, their existence eventually diminished over the years.

Statement re Doukhobor Homesteads

Ottawa, August 1, 1907

The Doukhobor Commission dealt with a total of 2,757 Doukhobor homesteads in Yorkton, Prince Albert, and Regina agencies:

There were cancelled on the recommendation of the Doukhobor Commissioner Doukhobor entries totalling	2,503
There were standing vacant Doukhobor homesteads which had previously been cancelled to the number of	79
There were standing reserved as village sites	39
There were entries standing of independent Doukhobors numbering	136
Total in three districts	2,757

Statement re Disposition of Doukhobor Homesteads

Ottawa, August 1, 1907

Following is a memorandum showing how the 2,757 Doukhobor homesteads dealt with by the Doukhobor Commission have been disposed of:

Set apart as reserves for Doukhobor communities		768
Under entry to independent Doukhobors		384
Thrown open to the general public:		
Taken to date	1,211	
Still untaken	394	1,605
		2,757

Spiritual Leaders

A group of Russian peasants, titled as "Icon Wrestlers," first emerged in Southern Russia in the early part of the 18th century. Their radical rejection of churches and priesthood said "it was wrong to worship icons, embellishments and religious sacraments." Their neglect of the Bible in favour of their own orally transmitted doctrines meant that no one is born to, or vested with, powers for the absolution of sin. The indwelling of the Spirit of God is in every man. They did not accept the sacrament of baptism, a general popular, Christian one. A baptism with water is not beneficial to our soul, for our soul baptism means that one accepts God's word, we are baptized by Christ in the name of the Holy Spirit. A baptism with water cleanses the body only, and not the soul. This completely divorced them from the Russian Orthodoxy. They developed unique cultural customs, traditions and lifestyles that spread throughout Southern Russian.

The first of their profound leaders was Silvan Kalesnikov in 1750. After his passing in 1775, the Icon Wrestlers acknowledged Llarion Pobirokin as their leader. After Pobirokin's death in 1792, he was succeeded by Savelii Kapustin.

During Kapustin's leadership occurred the first major investigation of the Doukhobors by Russian authorities. While living in communes, they did not merely cling obstinately to their faith, but they attracted other Russian peasants and people of other origins, such as Finns, Swedes, Ukrainians, as well

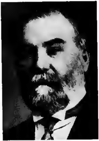
as the Russian Cossacks and military personnel, who abandoned the militia to live amongst the Doukhobors.

The decision of the authorities was to banish these sectarians to prevent any further influence of other people. They were dispersed to various regions of the empire. The area chosen was in the province of Taurida, an open frontier along the Milky Waters, where Tartars occasionally roamed. Their only neighbors were the Mennonites who preceded them.

With the death of Kapustin in 1817, the Kalmykov ruling dynasty began, with Vasilii Kalmykov succeeding Kapustin as leader. Kalmykov's leadership ended in 1832, and he was succeeded by his brother, Llarion Kalmykov. Under their leadership, much of the fertile soil was broken and the Doukhobor communes thrived because of their experience as farmers.

Peter Kalmykov, the last of the Kalmykov brothers, was named leader of the Doukhobors in 1845. He grew up to be a more dynamic personality than any of his predecessors who bore his family name. Peter Kalmykov's contribution to Doukhobor history was his marriage in 1856 to Luker'ia Gubanova. Luker'ia, with strength and will equal to that of her husband, had an intellectual character far surpassing his. Under Peter Kalmykov's leadership, the Doukhobors were permitted to leave the province of Taurida and return to the uplands of Caucasus. Many chose the wet mountain region, while others settled in the provinces of Yelezavitpol and Tbilisi. Peter Kalmykov with failing health and before his death in 1864 named his wife, Luker'ia, as his successor to assume the role of leadership.

Luker'ia Kalmykova was the first and only woman leader amongst the Doukhobors in all their history. Her accession was unopposed. Her doctrine of spiritual leadership, kindness and wisdom gained her respect from all who knew her. Luker'ia created unity amongst the Doukhobor villages and gained respect from government authorities for her attentive



Peter Vasilievitch Verigin, first leader of the Doukhobors in Canada

approach to vital matters of relations with the non-Doukhobor people.

Peter Verigin, who was born on June 29, 1859, was the sixth son of Vasilii Verigin. His mother, Anastasia Verigin, was the granddaughter of Savelii Kapustin.

Peter Verigin, being the great-grandson of Savelii Kapustin an intelligent, educated and knowledgeable of spiritual understanding of Doukhobor traditions, attracted the attention of Luker'ia Kalmykova. With failing health and impressed with Peter Verigin's dedication to Christian life and Doukhoborism, Luker'ia Kalmykova, expressed her wishes to village Elders that Peter Verigin inherit the leadership of the Doukhobors after her death. In January 1887, Doukhobors gathered in thousands by the grave of Luker'ia for a memorial service ending with six weeks of mourning. They sang psalms to commemorate their departed leader When the service ended, Ivan Makhortov stepped forward and bowed before Verigin and called on the Doukhobors to acknowledge Peter Verigin as their leader in the spirit of Christ Standing in a ceremonial "V," the Doukhobors bowed before Verigin, indicating their acceptance of Verigin as their Spiritual Leader

Verigin's reforms in the Doukhobor pattern of living were to abstain from drinking alcohol, smoking, consuming meat, and thereby becoming vegetarians Verigin renounced the Russian conscription law of the 1880's which was imposed on the Doukhobors, and instructed his followers to refuse military service Verigin refused to take an oath of allegiance to the Czar, saying his allegiance was to God alone and "to Him I shall abide " Verigin's attitude created a displeasure for the Russian Authorities He was arrested and sentenced to five years in exile in Shenkursk in the far northern province of Archangel While in exile, Verigin's followers from the Caucasus found their way by evading police and travelling under false passports to meet secretly with Verigin Verigin's inspirational messages were in oral form in which he would speculate on the true Christian way of life and a religious form of communal living With increasing pressures for Doukhobors to conform to the laws of the Russian empire, Doukhobors were willing to suffer oppression and persecution rather than yield to their demands

A small party of Doukhobors who were not Verigin's followers often cooperated with the authorities and acted as informers The Czarist officials hoped that by separating Verigin from his followers it would deprive them of any further inspiration to continue their resistance and gradually fall under the influence of the party that cooperated

The decision of the authorities was to extend the exile sentence of Verigin and to further the distance between him and his followers On November 4, 1894, Verigin was exiled to Northern Siberia The final destination was a small village of Obdorsk, at the mouth of the river Orb, on the Arctic Sea, approximately 3,000 miles from the Doukhobor settlement As a political exile,

he was permitted to live in a small house on the edge of the settlement. This great distance did not discourage Verigin's followers as they still continued their secret missions to meet with him, as they did in the past.

When the Doukhobors began their immigration to Canada, Verigin was not permitted to join his followers and was detained in his Siberian exile. Verigin was released in the autumn of 1902, after 15 years in exile, and was told by the Russian authorities that he must immediately leave for Canada. His request was denied to see his wife and his son, Peter, who lived in the Caucasus. The British mission in St. Petersburg made arrangements for Verigin's entry into Canada. In Moscow, Verigin was welcomed by Tolstoy. This was Verigin's first meeting with a man from whom he learnt so much, by reading his writings. Tolstoy admired Verigin for his powerful personality, with a mind that was quick, capable and profound. Tempered by his exiled life, he was widely read and was confident in the role as leader for which he was trained, in his younger years, by his predecessor, Luker'ia Kalmykova.

Verigin was well prepared for the task that awaited him in Canada. After meeting with Alymer Maude in Essex, England, Maude enlightened him on the situation he would be confronted with in Canada.

Verigin set sail and landed in St. John, where he was met by a Doukhobor delegation. On December 22, he reached Winnipeg where he met Acting Commissioners, Moffat and Crerar, the Yorkton immigration agents.

It was evident to the Canadians that Verigin was a very different kind of man than his followers. His whole expression was that of a man who suffered much and had triumphed over everything through his courage and constancy.

Verigin's attempt to put into practice his vision of an autonomous communitarian society on the prairies came in conflict with Canadian authorities, relating to the Dominion Land Act regulations.

Peter P. (Chistiakov) Verigin, second leader of the Doukhobors in Canada.

Verigin and a great majority of his followers in 1908 left the prairies and purchased land in the Kootenay Valley of British Columbia where their community was incorporated as the Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood. This permitted Verigin and some 5,000 of his followers to continue their communitarian life. On October 29, 1924, Peter V. Verigin's reign over the Doukhobors of approximately 24 years ended when a railway coach in which he was travelling with eight other people through the mountains between Brilliant and Grand Forks mysteriously exploded. The story of this tragedy, as told in detail by Canadian journalists, led to no solution to the mystery.

The Orthodox Doukhobors of British Columbia chose their new leader at the six-week graveside memorial service of the late Peter V. Verigin. He was Peter P. (Chistiakov) Verigin, the son of their former leader. Peter Chistiakov inherited his father's

intelligence and completed his education at an institute in Tbilisi. He was accustomed to Doukhobor traditions while living with his wife, one daughter and one son, Peter, in the Doukhobor settlements of the Soviet Union. Verigin left his family to live with the Doukhobors when he departed for Canada. (Verigin's wife Anastasia passed away soon after Verigin settled in Canada.)

Verigin sailed to Canada and landed in New York on September 16, 1927, where he was met by the acting chairman of the Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood. They travelled to the South Colony of the Independent Doukhobors in Saskatchewan where he was welcomed in Doukhobor tradition by an overwhelming crowd as he stood on the balcony of his father's house, in the village of Verigin.

Verigin then visited other Doukhobor settlements on the prairies, including the stronghold of the Independent Doukhobors in Blaine Lake, Saskatchewan.

When Verigin arrived at his final destination in the Kootenay Valley of British Columbia, he was welcomed by thousands of his followers at a graveside service for his late father at Brilliant, B.C. Verigin then established his permanent home in his father's house in Grand Forks and inherited the large religious co-operative established by his father in 1908. It consisted of a timber operation, growing orchards of fruit, vegetables, constructing and operating a jam factory. The co-operative was facing problems internally and financially. Families began to leave the co-operative, establishing themselves in an individual lifestyle.

The downfall of the co-operative began in 1937 when two major creditors proceeded with foreclosure and issued eviction notices early in 1939. The creditors then sold the land to individual members of the Doukhobor community, on agreement of sale.

Verigin's philosophy of Doukhobors living in the midst of Canadian society was not in the vision of his father. Verigin

favoured individual ownership as compared to community oriented life. Peter P. Verigin's initiative brought most of his former community members together in a new organization, being the "Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ," also known as the Orthodox Doukhobors.

Verigin frequently visited communities of the Independents in Saskatchewan, and admired them for their positive initiative of transition by adapting to the Canadian lifestyle, while at the same time retaining their valuable heritage.

Verigin was well aware that the Independents were not subjected to his leadership. Verigin counselled young people of Canadian origin and followers of the Doukhobor faith to acquire all the positive, constructive aspects of knowledge and skills that were offered through formal education. He emphasized that education was the key to progress.

Peter P. Chistiakov Verigin, after his arrival in Canada, made arrangements for his 18 year-old grandson, John Voykin, to immigrate to Canada. John was born in the wet mountain region in the village of Orlowka and arrived in Canada in 1928. John received his education in the province of British Columbia and assumed the name John J. Verigin.

Peter P. Verigin, with failing health, was admitted into a Saskatoon hospital on January 1, 1939. After a short illness, he passed away on the 11th day of February. He was buried in Brilliant in the same tomb beside his father.

The attempt by the Orthodox Doukhobors to locate the son of Peter P. Chistiakov Verigin in the Soviet Union, was to assume the role of leadership and enhance the continuity of the Verigin dynasty in Canada. On November 14, 1957, the Orthodox Doukhobors received official confirmation of the death of the son of Peter P. Chistiakov Verigin, in the Soviet Union, from the Soviet State authorities through the International Red Cross.

On August 16, 1960, at an official religious ceremony at the Verigin tomb by the Orthodox Doukhobors, John J. Verigin, the grandson, was acclaimed Honorary Chairman of the "Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ."

John J. Verigin was awarded the "Order of Canada" in 1976 for his work for peace and mutual understanding between people of various ethnic backgrounds in Canada.

John J. Verigin with his wife and a family of three children live in the interior of British Columbia in the settlement where the former Verigins first lived.

Religion and Religious Observances

Independent Doukhobors do not submit to the hereditary leadership vested in the Verigin family which is accepted unquestionably by the majority of the Orthodox Doukhobors, members of the "Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ," who live in the interior of British Columbia.

The Independents have maintained a friendly relationship with their counterparts, the Orthodox Doukhobors in British Columbia. The ideology and basic principals of their faith have not been altered and are maintained as that of their forbears.

Doukhobor Prayer Services are held in what is known as the Doukhobor Prayer Home. The prayer home is of plain design and architecture with no religious sacraments. As one enters the Prayer Home, there are two Doukhobor mottos hung on the front wall, the motto to the left of the wall reads "Toil and Peaceful Life," and the motto to the right on the wall reads "The Welfare of All Nations is not worth the Life of One Child."

For Sunday Prayer Services and religious observances, a small ceremonial table is placed covered with a white tablecloth. On it are placed a loaf of bread, water and salt signifying bread and water—"The Staff of Life"; the salt—"Salt of the Earth." The men assemble on one side of the table and the ladies on the opposite side, facing each other in a "V" formation. Services commence with the reciting of religious prayers by volunteers of the congregation, followed by the singing of psalms and religious hymns. The Lord's Prayer is then recited by a volunteered individual from the congregation and followed by the singing of the Lord's Prayer by the congregation. Prayer services are approximately three-quarters of an hour. The religious psalms and hymns are sung without musical accompaniment. A designated Elder conducts the prayer services. Doukhobor choirs contribute to religious gatherings and also to cultural life as well.

PSALM 73

What Was the Purpose of Christ's Coming to Earth?

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty Creator who created us heaven and earth![176] who created us and gave us light. We confess to the heavenly God, because He is good, because His mercy is eternal, because He forgives us all our transgressions. We also worship the Father and the True Holy Spirit, because our Father seeks such worshippers. We worship our Father with our true spirit, because God is a Spirit[177] God is word, God is man;[178] therefore are we worthy to worship Him. We are also the participants of His life-giving, strange and immortal sacraments of Christ for the salvation of our sins.

We are baptized with the word of God: in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen. The paradise of the Holy Spirit is today upon us. Let us take His cross and say: save, Oh Lord, your people and bless us, Lord, and reward us![179] We desire to establish ourselves firmly as sons of the Church of God. For the Lord says this: You are a temple of the living God, I shall enter you and dwell in you, I shall be your God, and you my people[180]

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174 Comp. "Epistle to the Hebrews," ch. 11, v. 1. Comp. with question and answer 7 of Psalm 5. (See p. 36 in the "Book of Life")
F.n. V.B.B.

175 The Doukhobors call this Psalm "The Key of the Faith."
F.n. V.B.B.

176 In the "Gospel" of John, ch. 4, v. 23 and 24, it is said:
"23. But the hour cometh, and now is when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him."
"24. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."
F.n. V.B.B.

The prayer home has banquet facilities in the lower level of the building where occasionally potluck dinners are held, and visitor entertainment, bazaars and afternoon teas, enhance cultural activity.

Religious observances are: Christmas, Easter, and there is also a significant religious day of observance in the Doukhobor faith, a day known as "St. Peter's Day." On June 29th of each calendar year, commemorating the event, special prayer services are held followed by an outdoor picnic lunch. Following the religious service, an afternoon program is held of choir singing by various age groups, and also visiting choirs from various areas of Saskatchewan, and on occasions from Alberta and British Columbia. Guest speakers are invited from various levels of government, such as civic, provincial and federal. Invitations are also extended to people of various origin and faith to share in the commemorative event which is alternated annually between Blaine Lake and Saskatoon.

On October 19, 1987, the Saskatchewan Doukhobors were privileged by the visit of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth and His Royal Highness to the National Doukhobor Heritage Village at Verigin, Saskatchewan. The former home of Peter Vasilhevitch Verigin is a part of the Heritage Village and now designated a 'National Doukhobor Museum."

When the Royal Cavalcade with Her Majesty arrived at the National Doukhobor Heritage Village, there was no traditional "Royal" gun salute as Her Majesty and His Royal Highness stepped from their limousine. The Doukhobors, being "conscientious objectors," welcomed the Royal Couple by singing the hymn "Precious Moments, To Us God Has Gifted" by the local choir from the Verigin area.

After a brief visit to the museum and chatting with numerous individuals from the large crowd in attendance, the Royal

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Facing Page *Prayer Home of the Independent Doukhobors, located in the town of Blaine Lake, Saskatchewan.* Photo Author

Cavalcade departed while the choir sang the traditional hymn, "God Be With You Till We Meet Again"

A religious observance was held on the grounds of the National Doukhobor Heritage Village site on July 9, 1989, by the Doukhobors commemorating their ninety years in the province of Saskatchewan and Canada

In attendance were the Lieutenant Governor for the province of Saskatchewan, the Honourable Sylvia Fedoruk, representatives from both Federal and Provincial governments, commemorating the historic event

The occasion hosted descendants of Doukhobor faith, and people from other ethnic origin from across the vast Canadian Nation

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Facing Page Verigin Museum and Tolstoy Statue, *from an oil painting by Agatha Stupnikoff*

The Verigin Museum is the former home of Peter Vasilievitch Verigin The museum portrays the finest example of Doukhobor architecture built in 1917, located on the grounds of the National Doukhobor Heritage Village, Verigin, Saskatchewan

The L N Tolstoy Statue was unveiled at an annual religious day of observance, known as "Heritage Day," on July 18–19, 1986, at the Heritage Village, Verigin, Saskatchewan

The statue is a symbol commemorating the famed Russian novelist, philosopher and reformer Tolstoy unquestionably came to the rescue of the people of Doukhobor faith in Czarist Russia, during the time of oppression and severe persecutions by the Czarist regime and the Russian state controlled Orthodox Church

Tolstoy's appeal for amnesty for the Doukhobors was granted, with permission for the Doukhobors to immigrate, from tyranny to freedom, to the Canadian North West

The statue is one of two identical works presented to Canadian Doukhobor groups by the Society Rodina of the USSR The other statue is placed on the grounds of the Castlegar Doukhobor Museum, Castlegar, British Columbia

The event was hosted by the Verigin Doukhobor Heritage Society In attendance were Soviet dignitaries from the Soviet government's cultural ministry Other guests were Uri Chernoff, the sculptor, Llya Tolstoy, a great grandson of Leo Tolstoy Federal and provincial government representatives were in attendance and participated in the historical event

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A religious day of observance is held annually in the latter part of July at the National Doukhobor Heritage Village in Verigin, Saskatchewan. This day is known as "Heritage Day" commemorating the "Doukhobor Heritage" of the past, with a traditional overtone of the present. This event attracts people from all walks of life to a program similar to that of "St. Peter's Day," and is sponsored by the Verigin Doukhobor Heritage Society.

Facing Page *Royal visit of "Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth and His Royal Highness Duke of Edinburgh," at the National Doukhobor Heritage Village, Verigin, Saskatchewan, October 19, 1987*
Photo Author

Cultural Identity

Succeeding generations of Independent Doukhobors of Canadian origin, with the greater concentration of descendants residing in areas where their predecessors first settled in Saskatchewan in 1899 are in such areas as: Blaine Lake, Langham, Saskatoon, Watson, Wadena, Kylemore, Buchanan, Pelly, Canora, Verigin, Kamsack, Yorkton, etc. Other settlements may be found in Benito, Manitoba, and in the province of Alberta in areas such as: Cowley, Lundbrick, Taber, etc.

Others spread across the length and breadth of the nation in various occupations of their trade and profession in their everyday lives.

A number of families that migrated south of the 49th parallel into the states of Oregon and California maintain a close and friendly association with the Independents of Saskatchewan.

Each community possesses a centre for their religious and cultural activities and is known as a Prayer Home. Each society is independent of each other. The activities and function of a society is administered by an elected board known as Trustees, from its membership, elected in a three-year term rotation at a yearly annual meeting.

Several elders are appointed at the annual meeting to assist the elected trustees in the society's various functions, and in conducting Sunday prayer services and religious observances, funerals, weddings, etc.

An annual membership levy is assessed on each member of approximately ten dollars per member, or as the need arises. All services for the sustainment of a Society are voluntary by its membership. Various committees are appointed to direct the society's religious, cultural and social activities.

Attempts were made to preserve the Russian language by providing Russian instruction after regular school hours by the Independent Doukhobors when instructors were available, as the public school system did not offer instruction in their heritage language.

After several decades, the descending generations of Doukhobor background and Canadian origin through intermarriage with younger generations of various cultural identity, and due to the process of democratic lifestyle in the progress and development of our nation, it was evident that Russian language became a barrier to the younger generations. To maintain an understanding and provide continuity of the Doukhobor Faith, its heritage and cultural identity, various books and materials were written and published in the English language on Doukhobors and their lifestyle of the past and present.

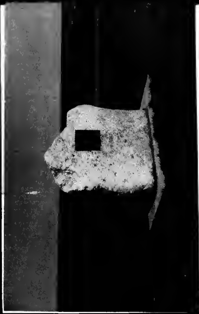
To preserve the cultural heritage and provide continuity of Doukhobor Faith, Sunday school lessons are provided in prayer homes in Russian and English for younger age groups of children of Doukhobor descent. Instruction is provided by volunteer individuals from within the membership of the society, knowledgeable of Doukhobor principals and ideology.

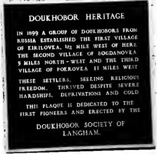
In relevancy to the ideals of Doukhobor faith and their religious doctrines, the complete text of Doukhobor Ideals and Psalms was translated from Russian to the English language. The translated version became available in 1978 titled, "Book of Life of Doukhobors," Translated Version 1978.

The translated version will preserve and extend the philosophical heritage and surmount the linguistic barrier for the younger generations of Doukhobor background, and will

enable people of other cultural descents to better understand Doukhobor ideals.

The project for the translation of the Book of Life was created, coordinated and published by Sam George Stupnikoff. Dr. V. O. Buyniak, Department of Slavic Studies, University of Saskatchewan, was engaged for the translation of the Book of life from the Russian to the English language. The translation was reviewed and edited by a committee of Doukhobor descent, prior to its publication.





DOUKHOBOR HERITAGE

IN 1899 A GROUP OF DOUKHOBORS FROM RUSSIA ESTABLISHED THE FIRST VILLAGE OF KIRILOVKA, 1/2 MILE WEST OF HERE THE SECOND VILLAGE OF BOGDANOVKA 5 MILES NORTH-WEST AND THE THIRD VILLAGE OF POKROVKA 11 MILES WEST

THESE SETTLERS, SEEKING RELIGIOUS FREEDOM, THRIVED DESPITE SEVERE HARDSHIPS, DEPRIVATIONS AND COLD

THIS PLAQUE IS DEDICATED TO THE FIRST PIONEERS AND ERECTED BY THE

DOUKHOBOR SOCIETY OF LANGHAM.

Facing Page *Cairn commemorating Doukhobor Village settlments in the southern portion of the Prince Albert Doukhobor Reserve, Langham area, 1899–1907 Cairn location five kilometers west of the town of Langham, along highway no 16 (Yellow Head)*
Photo Author

Traditions and Communication

The special traditions of the ethnocultural community include the Pioneer Era of Doukhobor bread baking in outdoor ovens at the annual Prairie Land Exhibition in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, in the early part of the month of July. At this event, bread is baked in permanently established outdoor ovens on the exhibition grounds. Bread is sold to the general public by the loaf or by the slice, with a coating of butter or jam. Beverages such as tea or coffee are also available. This annual event of bread baking attracts tourism from various parts of our continent. This event is sponsored by the Saskatoon Doukhobor Society.

The annual Saskatoon Folkfest, of which the Saskatoon Doukhobor Society is a part of, is held in the latter part of August each year. The Doukhobor pavilion is one of many ethnocultural pavilions.

In the Doukhobor pavilion, one will find Doukhobor traditional foods served such as Borsch, Doukhobor bread that was baked in outdoor ovens, perogi with sour cream or butter, and non-alcoholic beverages such as tea, coffee, etc. One will also find a display of various Doukhobor handicraft such as weaving of linen on handcrafted looms, the spinning of wool, various displays of art work portraying Doukhobor past history, sale of souvenirs, pins and published books on Doukhobors, etc.

The pavilion doors open from 4 p.m. to 12 p.m. in the week of the event from Wednesday through Saturday. A program of entertainment is staged every hour, consisting of choirs singing folk songs and traditional hymns, duets and solos, and a narration of Doukhobor past history. Traditional Doukhobor dress of the past is worn by choir groups and individual participants.

The Blaine Lake and Saskatoon Ladies Clubs are charitable organizations from within the membership of the respective Doukhobor societies. Semi-annual bazaars and bake sales are held, also donated handicraft items are sold, and the event also promotes an afternoon tea, with an atmosphere that creates an enjoyable afternoon for all those attending and is open to the general public.

Funds derived from these events are donated periodically to charitable organizations, such as the Heart Fund, Cancer Fund, Red Cross, Hospital Foundations, orphanages, etc. The Blaine Lake Doukhobor Ladies Club contributed financially to Third World countries for the education of underprivileged children.

The Blaine Lake/Saskatoon Doukhobor Choir has been in existence since early 1950's and was first organized in Blaine Lake from third and fourth generation descendants of the Independent Doukhobors. Over the years a number of members moved to Saskatoon where several members from the Saskatoon and Langham Doukhobor Societies joined the choir. Over the years the choir provided an opportunity for younger generations to participate as members of the choir.

The choir has been active, participating in various functions: prayer services, funerals, weddings, public concerts, competitive and non-competitive festivals. The choir has also made a number of good-will tours throughout Saskatchewan, and also tours to British Columbia. To preserve the cultural heritage of the Doukhobors, the choir produced two albums being a collection of traditional psalms, hymns and folk songs suitable for a variety of occasions.

The group remains active in the 1990's, although time has taken its toll of several members from the choir. The voluntary efforts of the choir members can more accurately be defined as a "good-will group."

A traditional hymn that was composed by the Doukhobors titled

"In Honor of Peace and Freedom"

(Translated Version)

Let us honor Peace, and freedom's triumph,
Over strife and age-old hate aflame,
World wide brotherhood is now the answer,
Love, forgiveness, let us all proclaim.

Tears and sorrow, terror, agitation,
Let them stay forever in the past.
Chains, oppression, hate and exploitation,
Shall deface the earth no more at last.

We'll assemble as one human family
And create a brotherhood of man
Toil and Peace shall be our foremost emblem,
Love shall reign, supreme, in all the land.

From one far horizon to another,
Let our universal slogan be
"Brothers all, in love we stand united
And attain man's highest dignity"

Let us honor Peace, and freedom's triumph,
Over strife's and war's immortal sin,
We'll forget past sorrows and misfortunes
And to Love our thankful praises sing

Facing Page *Blaine Lake / Saskatoon Doukhobor Choir 1969, Photo*

The Independents took keen interest in the affairs of their local communities and served as reeves, councillors, school board trustees, rural telephone company directors, co-operative organizations in various social organizations, and also in the field of sports and entertainment.

Education

People of Doukhobor faith migrated from Czarist Russia where the predominant language was Russian. Some difficulty was experienced during the migration period and the settlement on their new frontier where English was the spoken language. For the first years communication and understanding of the Canadian governments, citizenship and land regulations were not clearly defined, and a misunderstanding was evident on both sides.

During the period of communitarian life on the prairies, the Russian language and cultural identity was maintained without difficulty. In 1907 by re-enactment of the Hamlet Clause, the community lifestyle of Doukhobors no longer prevailed.

The Society of Friends "Quakers" from London, England, sent in 1901 Michael Sherbinin, a Russian expatriate nobleman, to the Prince Albert Colony to begin teaching Doukhobor children to read and write in English and to do simple arithmetic. He first taught in the villager's houses in the Petrovka village. His efforts in teaching attracted more students from the surrounding villages. This resulted in the building of a permanent two-room school in the Petrovka village by the British Quakers. The students attending the Petrovka village school were children of the Independent Doukhobors.

In 1909, the government began establishing rural public school districts in the more populated areas of the province. This was to initiate a permanent form of education in the

English language, with a regulation enacted whereby any child, upon reaching the age of seven years, would be required to attend those schools in which school district the family resided.

Some of the schools that were built in the vicinity of the former Doukhobor village sites acquired the name of that particular village such as Slavanka School District No. 2279, Ospennia School District No. 2386, Haralowka School District No. 2396, Petrofka School District No. 23, etc.

The form of education as prescribed by the government was welcomed by the Independent Doukhobors. The attendance of their children in the English schools provided their parents with an opportunity to familiarize themselves with a language that was predominant in the province and the nation.

The implementation of the public education system in Saskatchewan did not meet the approval of the Old Colony Mennonites in the Rosthern Mennonite Reserve. Their form of education in their private village schools was instruction in the German language, as it formed the basis of their religion and lifestyle. Due to subsequent political changes relating to the re-interpretation of the Hamlet Clause, government interference was evident in the Rosthern Mennonite Settlement in 1909. The government made available for general settlement all the land that was not occupied by Mennonites, thus eliminating all reserve boundaries. Government interference in German schools by replacing them with English-speaking public schools proved intolerable to many conservatively-minded Old Colony Mennonites.

In their respect, German instruction would maintain and preserve Mennonite culture. In 1922 some five hundred and fifty Mennonites who were dedicated to their culture left the Rosthern Reserve and migrated to Mexico and later to South America.

The Mennonites that remained continued to farm, with some families moving to their individual homesteads while others lived in villages, and each farmed their individual land.

The experiment by the Canadian government of settling the open prairies with groups of experienced agricultural people proved very beneficial at that time. Revisions in the government's political atmosphere in the early 1900's were incompatible and proved disastrous towards the lifestyles of the Mennonites and the Doukhobors.

Peter G. Makaroff, who was one of the students that attended the Petrovka village school, later graduated from the College of Law. Mr. Makaroff was the first Doukhobor to obtain a degree in law. In his law practice over the years, Mr. Makaroff attained a high degree of respect from the legal profession and all those that were acquainted with him.

Other Independents, by the 1930's, from studying at universities were graduating into various forms of trade and occupation. This trend continued over the decades and into the 1990's. Students graduated as doctors, dentists, lawyers, chartered accountants, in education as superintendents, principals, teachers, consultants, guidance counsellors, in agriculture as agricultural representatives and highly efficient farmers, etc.

The highest number of Doukhobor students graduating from universities over the years emerged from the Independent Doukhobor settlement of the Blaine Lake area.

Conclusion

The Doukhobor story has been presented by many journalists who have stressed the eccentricities of Doukhobor society. The Doukhobors are a small ethnic minority group, a tiny vessel in an ocean of protestant and non-protestant faiths, defending their position with mainly pacifistic tactics encountered adverse publicity. The Independent Doukhobors have been the most adapted group and have almost been ignored by Canadian writers.

Thus the Doukhobor cultural identity has endured the eccentricities of the past until now. With the advent of a new generation of young people, aware of their destiny, it shows signs of a healthy, vigorous future. Instead of abandoning their cultural inheritance, the Doukhobors, in applying traditional concepts to their modern everyday lives have grown to appreciate the fundamental values and beliefs of their forbears.

The Independent Doukhobors' efforts were to achieve a relationship of mutual understanding, respect and friendship with the society surrounding them, so as not to assimilate in the cultural division, but to integrate and live in harmony as part of Canada's multi cultural mosaic.

A CFQC Saskatoon television production written and directed by Carol Blenkin titled "Saskatchewan Doukhobors," in 1987, was televised on CTV's affiliate of stations across the nation. The production, as received by the nation's viewers, was consistent with Doukhobor cultural identity and lifestyle of the past and present It was the first such production in the ninety years of Canadian Doukhobor history, identifying Saskatchewan's Independent Doukhobors

As we approach in the 1990's the 100th anniversary of the "Burning of Arms" by people of Doukhobor Faith "1895–1995," may we reflect on the high ideals and a doctrine of religious form of Peter Vasilievitch Verigin and his followers Adhering to the Commandment "Thou Shalt Not Kill," they torched a glowing flame at the hour past midnight on June 29, 1895, an undaunted example in protest to militarism and all forms of violence It was a symbolic act marking their total renunciation of taking life and an unprecedented example of true Christianity

The severe persecutions that were encountered by their decisive stand from the Czarist State and Church authorities received world wide attention from humanitarians around the world—a message that is firmly undisputed for peaceful co-existence of the human race

In the final decades of the 20th century, world nations have acquired through scientific research and technology what is now termed as the "Nuclear Age," an energy of superior magnitude in unprecedented form With the uncertainty and fear as it exists amongst nations in the political atmosphere of the world, vast arsenals of nuclear weapons have been produced and amassed by nations of super powers and military might

These arsenals are maintained for the purpose of defence and aggression, and in the event of conflict, possess a potential of instant global annihilation and destruction of all forms of life on earth

The era of the "Nuclear Age" rekindled the dying embers of the glowing flame, torched by the people of Doukhobor Faith in the final decade of the 19th century In their message as proclaimed, "nations must beat their swords into plow shares, for future generations of all nations to live in harmony under an umbrella of peace and brotherhood "

The Nuclear Era instills fear and subjects humanitarians and peace activists to march in scores by the thousands in major centers throughout the world during a time of crisis. It is an undaunted example in protest to militarism and all forms of violence, a symbolic act marking their total renunciation of taking life, an unprecedented example of true christianity. It is a message firmly undisputed for peaceful co-existence of the human race.

The virtually utopian concepts achieved by the Doukhobor community undoubtedly inspired the observation in the Encyclopaedia Britannica. This describes the Doukhobors as "industrious and abstemious in their lives and, when living up to the standard of their faith, present one of the nearest approaches to the realization of the Christian ideal which has ever been attained."

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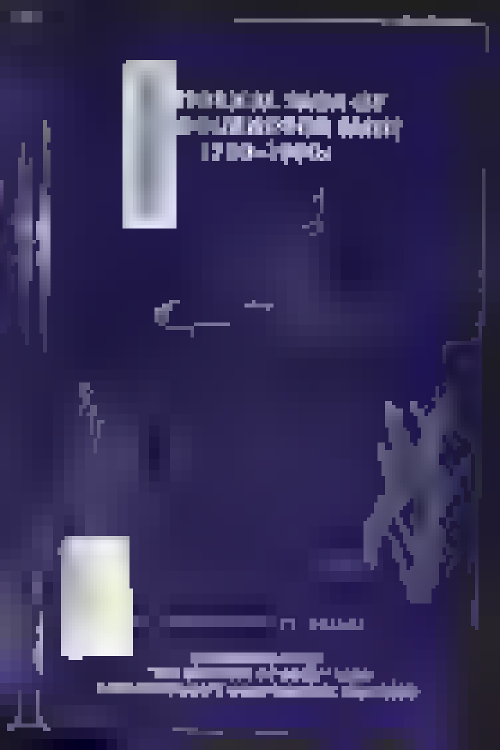
About the Author...

Sam George Stupnikoff is a semi-retired farmer, a community-minded individual, a translator, an author and a family man. He was born in 1919, and raised on the original homestead (1915) of the Stupnikoff family and still maintains this original family farm. He was actively involved in leadership roles in community and municipal affairs, in the Doukhobor Society of Blaine Lake and currently serves as an Elder in the Saskatoon Doukhobor Society. He has an avid interest in the history of the Doukhobor faith and its people, and in the history and settlement of other ethnic minorities in the pioneer era. In keeping with his concern to preserve the Doukhobor faith and to avail it to future generations, he created and co-ordinated a project in the translation of the "Book of Life" from the Russian language to the English language. The translated version, entitled "The Book of Life of the Doukhobors" was published in 1978 for the benefit of younger generation Doukhobors, as well as the population at large. This publication is currently in use in many major academic institutions in Canada and the U.S.A. His second publication, "The Historical Saga of The Carleton Region, 1797–1920," provides the history of the settlement and hardships encountered by some of the ethnic minorities within that region. This book is currently being used in the Social Studies curriculum in Saskatchewan. "Toil and Peaceful Life" is written in tribute to the people of the Doukhobor faith, the commemoration of the one hundred year anniversary of the "Burning of Arms," and a celebration of ninety years, to the status of independence of the Doukhobors living in the province of Saskatchewan.



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Dedication

To the memory of our parents
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Universal" Brotherhood. [illegible]
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Preface

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Burning of Arms

June 26, 1975

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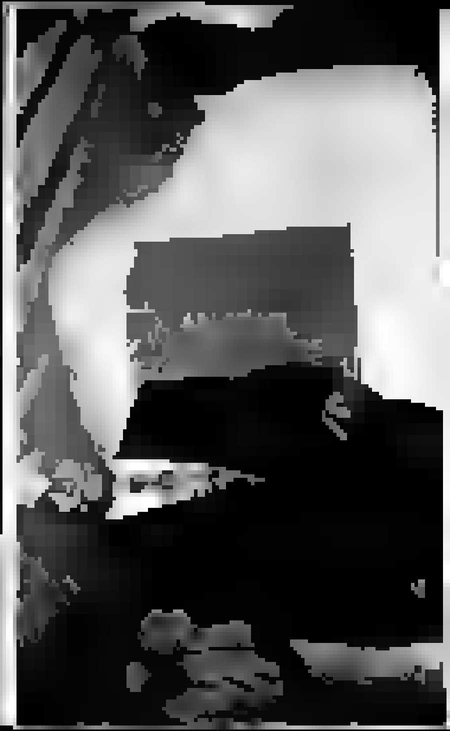

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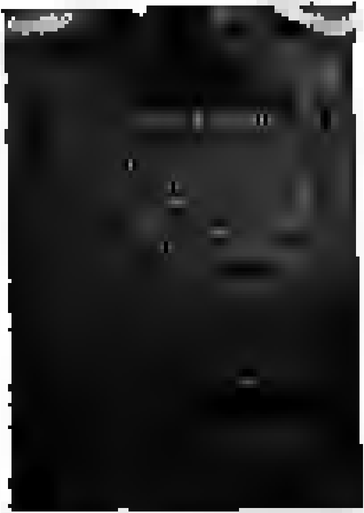

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Religion and Religious Observances

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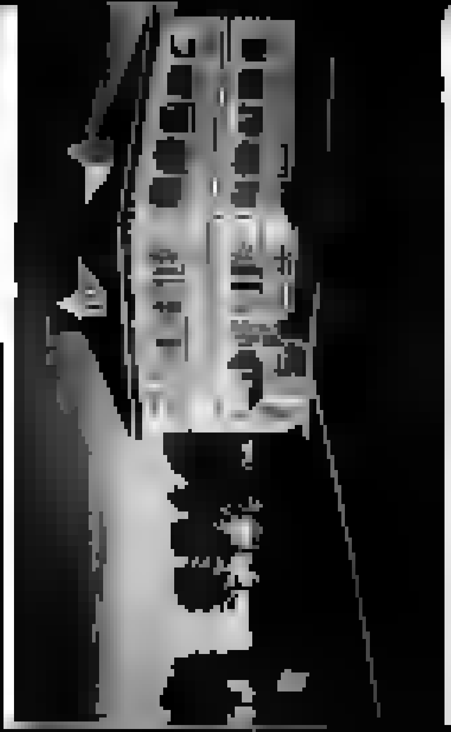

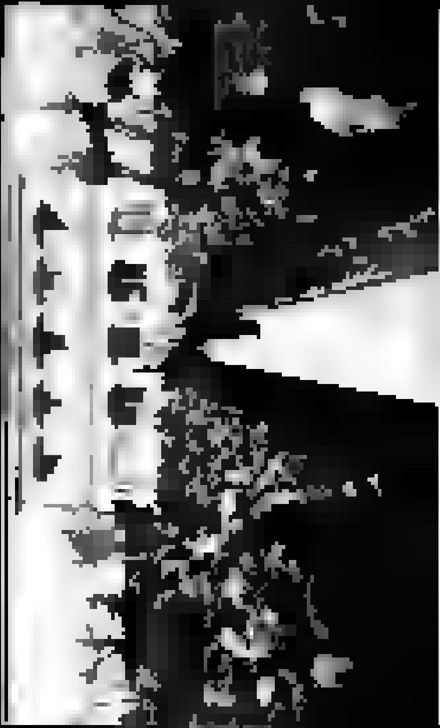

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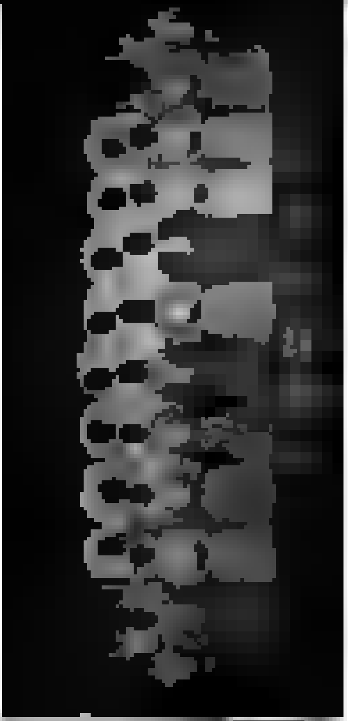

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The Poem of Peace and Freedom

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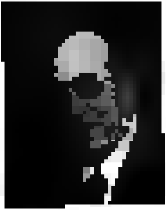
About the Author



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